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ABSTRACT

The Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program has offered many different avenues of personal exploration for more than 5,000 women in its Philadelphia neighborhood for 6 years. The women's program components include adult basic education classes, self-development workshops, a community-based degree-oriented college program, a bilingual crisis hotline for abused women and children, employment counseling and job readiness training, personal counseling, and free childcare for participants. This manual is designed to describe and share the experience of developing this multi-cultural awareness project. The manual articulates a learner-centered approach for the development of curriculum materials for adult education classes which explore and analyze people's experiences living in a multi-racial, multi-cultural community. The process, teaching approach, and materials used in the project are included in the manual, along with a description of the women's program. The manual also contains a bibliography and list of resources. Appendixes to the manual provide techniques for six inservice sessions and the materials for the project's "Lighthouse" program. (KC)

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BUILDING MULTI-CULTURAL AWARENESS - A TEACHING APPROACH

FOR LEARNER CENTERED EDUCATION

Written by
WENDY LUTTRELL

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PREFACE

This manual is designed to describe and share the experience of developing a multi-cultural awareness project at the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program - a multi-faceted community-based organization in Philadelphia. The manual articulates a learner-centered approach for the development of curriculum materials for adult education classes, which explore and analyze people's experiences living in a multi-racial, multi-cultural community. The process, teaching approach, and materials used in the project are included in the manual, along with a description of the Women's Program. It is my hope that this manual will serve as a working model for others who will choose to introduce multi-cultural education and awareness into their classes or programs.

THE CONTEXT:

For six years the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program has offered many different avenues of personal exploration for women in the neighborhood. The Women's Program components include adult basic education classes, self development workshops, a community based degree-oriented college program, a bilingual crisis hotline for abused women and children, employment counseling and job readiness training, personal counseling, and free childcare for participants. Since its inception, more than five thousand women have been engaged in different aspects of the program.

The goal of the Women's Program has been and remains the development of opportunities for women to empower themselves through education, personal support, and employment counseling. The program's philosophy was established on the premise that students, teachers, and staff work most productively in surroundings where they exercise some control, through their contributions, to the content and design of the program.

The Women's Program's origin and foundation in the Fishtown/Kensington community has been a key to its vitality. The program is housed in the Lutheran Settlement House which has served this community since 1911, when it first began providing valuable resources to working-class Irish and Polish immigrants. For the past 15 years, the neighborhood has experienced rapid changes - escalating unemployment due to local plant closings, drastic cutbacks in social welfare programs, and deteriorating city and neighborhood resources such as housing, education, health care, and recreational facilities. The Lutheran Settlement House, recognizing the mandate of its constituency for change and growth, in 1976 initiated a needs assessment of women in the community. Overwhelmingly, women responded that they needed and wanted education.* Some women wanted classes where they could prepare for a high school equivalency diploma, while others

*According to the 1970 census, 80% of the adult population in the Fishtown/Kensington community do not have a high school diploma.

needed basic skill development. Still others expressed interest in educational self development, such as carpentry, auto mechanics, or parenting workshops. Other women wanted more and better education to enable them to help their children with school, or to provide the skills empowering them to "fight city hall" to make things better in their neighborhood. Because of the rapid economic, social, and cultural changes in their community, many women were making changes in their own lives - often struggling with and challenging traditional sex role expectations that had limited their options for generations. The Women's Program grew in response to these needs and out of this growth developed a unique approach to community-based education.

Over the years, the Women's Program has brought women from different educational, cultural, racial, and class backgrounds together. These women have been themselves valuable resources for learning and have contributed significantly to the development of the program. This diversity among women has inspired the multi-cultural awareness project which is described in the following chapters.

CHAPTER I: Introduction to the Project

The Adult Basic Education Program

The adult basic education program offers classes for a broad diversity of students: including basic reading classes for those who read below a 4th grade level, ABE classes for those reading between a 5th and 8th grade level, and GED classes for those reading above the 8th grade level. For many students, this is their first opportunity to make up for years of miseducation which too often resulted in frustration and underdeveloped skills. One of the most attractive aspects of the program is its small, informal, and flexible setting. Here education is learner centered--skills and information are carefully chosen to meet the immediate needs and interests of the students. For many students, the classroom is a place to share concerns with other people in an open and sometimes intimate atmosphere that in no way resembles traditional school environments.

While students enter the program with varied skill levels, they share many things in common. Most are adult women and mothers, many are single parents, and all have incomes ranging from below official poverty levels to $15,000. The most striking commonality is that everyone, as an adult, must juxtapose the roles of student, parent, spouse, worker and those other attendant responsibilities. An essential ingredient in the adult basic education program is the access for students to support services; such as free on-site childcare and counseling to help ease the burden of returning to school. Alumni of the program have enrolled in college or training programs, while others have entered the workforce. Many have become active in community organizations, or in the students' planning committee which organizes grassroots fundraising and special events for the program.

The teachers in the program are largely responsible for the successful amalgamation of an informal yet academically challenging classroom environment. The teaching staff includes neighborhood people as well as professionals and para-professionals from outside the community, thus providing a wide variation of educational experiences. The staff is divided almost evenly between state-certified teachers and graduates of the program, a balance which strengthens the community-based nature of the adult basic education program. The teachers have shared their personal experiences and perspectives among themselves and with students, thus sparking an innovative educational process in the classroom. Teachers meet regularly to discuss course materials classroom problems and progress, student concerns, plans for special events and celebrations such as graduation, and future directions for the program. Student involvement through the planning committee and active teacher participation have made the program more aware of and responsive to individual and community concerns.

The goals of the adult basic education program are to: a) identify and incorporate the knowledge, skills and experiences that each student

brings to class; b) expand people's comprehension of and control over their lives by creating and sharing knowledge together; and c) activate and refind students' skills to critically think, make informed and realistic decisions, and responsibly act on those decisions in their lives. In 1980, a curriculum specialist joined the staff to design and implement a curriculum development process which would translate these goals into the classroom learning process. Curriculum materials were developed in the first year which combined basic skill development with content drawn from students' experiences and daily concerns. These materials are included in the manual, Women in the Community: A Curriculum Guide for Students and Teachers, and will be explained more fully in Chapter II. The goal for 1981-82 was to expand this curriculum to include more multi-cultural materials which explore both the tension and potential enrichment of living in a culturally diverse neighborhood and a multi-racial city.

Dilemma #1: The Program's Isolation

The Women's Program is located in a white neighborhood, and although it is within walking distance of a large hispanic community, the majority of students enrolled in the program since its inception have been white. Intensified outreach efforts to neighboring black and hispanic communities have increased the minority population in the adult basic education classes. In 1977 the ABE/GED program started with a 3% non-white population and increased to 20% in 1982. Additionally, city-wide recruitment for the Displaced Homemaker Project resulted in a significant black enrollment in that Project. Despite growing minority enrollment, the identity and image of the program remains predominantly white.

The preponderance of the Women's Program staff, teachers and students are white, and initial curriculum materials reflected this reality.

Despite its setting in a white neighborhood, and the historical isolation and segregation of surrounding neighborhoods, the program is committed to racial integration in its classrooms. This commitment has raised many issues of conflict and exploration for the staff. One core issue remains paramount: how can the program modify its white image to creatively explore and impact on the effects of racism in the classroom, in teaching materials, and in program direction?

Approach #1: Linking with Neighboring Non-White Organizations

The Lighthouse Hispanic Women's Program is only a five minute drive from the Lutheran Settlement House: physical distance is not what separates the two programs. The communities served by each program are isolated from each other not only by race, neighborhood, and culture but most strikingly by language.

The Hispanic Women's Program at the Lighthouse offers a variety of

educational and counseling activities-including an ESL (English as a Second Language) class, a GED (General Education Diploma) class, and peer support groups, all geared to address the needs of Spanish speaking women. The program provides a physical and psychological space for hispanic women to share their skills and concerns in a culturally familiar setting where Spanish is the primary language. For the past two years, the program has organized and conducted a highly successful local conference - entirely in Spanish - focused on the chaning needs of hispanic women.* These events have brought women together from across the city to share their experiences and perspectives about living in two worlds--the world of English speakers and the world of Spanish speakers.

Over the years, both Women's Programs have grown together as neighbors, often sharing resources and expertise. In 1980, the two programs jointly sponsored a GED class, taught in English at the Lighthouse, which provided the initial impetus for the LSH Women's Program to examine the cause and effects of its isolation from the hispanic community. This class forged a significant linkage between the two programs. Parts of the original Women in Community materials were included in the curriculum. Students' responses to selected stories were positive, but the teacher in the class and the director of the Hispanic Women's Program had valuable insights and criticisms about the overall design and content of the manual, and its relevance to the lives of hispanic students. Both the teacher and the director responded positively to the development of curriculum materials which dealt with conflicts within families and generations around disciplining children, changing values, and shifting sex role expectations. However, they argued, the materials did not examine a primary dilemma of life in America for hispanic students--the reality of living in two cultures. This reality included a number of different concerns that affected people's daily lives: a) exploring and appreciating one's own cultural identity; b) understanding the historical relationship between Latin America and the U.S.; c) pursuing an education in a second language; and d) balancing between two cultures and life styles, two languages, and consequently for many people two different lives. Additionally, the provided the curriculum specialist with the names of social service workers in the hispanic community who would be likely to offer valuable contributions to the program, as one way to further identify missing pieces in the Women in Community manual. Based on these suggestions, the curriculum specialist and the adult education program coordinator at the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program designed Project CLASP: Community Linkage Aimed At Special Populations. This project was an outgrowth of the new relationship between the Lighthouse and the Lutheran Settlement House programs. Its goals were to develop linkages with hispanic organizations in the Fishtown/Kensington community and to provide new materials and methodology for curriculum geared specifically to hispanic women.

*Conference title:"Tia para La Mujer Latina" cosponsored by Women's Health Concerns Committee, Nationwide Women's Program AFSC, and the Lighthouse Hispanic Women's Program

The first step in the project was to jointly offer another class at the Lighthouse where students and teachers could explore the problems and positive potentials of living in two cultures, and to develop new materials together. (This classroom process will be described in Chapter 3). These materials would also be used in the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program classes to sensitize other students to the history and special concerns of their hispanic neighbors.

Dilemma #2: Racism As A Classroom Issue:

Confronting people's myths, stereotypes, and fears about other cultural and ethnic groups was not new to the teachers or students in the LSH Women's Program classes. Many of the original Women in the Community materials described the damaging impact of racial violence in the schools, people's fear of bussing, racial discrimination in education and in the labor market, and negative racist or classist myths about welfare recipients. One article in the manual discussed a community organizing drive to force the Philadelphia Board of Education to build a badly needed new high school facility. One of the organizers, a white woman from the community, explained:

> "The main reason why whites did not take up the struggle for the new school was because of racism. During the height of the struggle in the early 70's, Mayor Rizzo and his cronies were fanning the flames of racism to the point where the white community was blinded to the fact that our children were also being hurt by the situation."*

While some of the curriculum materials in the manual raised the issue of racism, teachers felt uncomfortable or uneasy dealing with such a potentially volatile topic - especially in racially integrated classes. Some teachers were afraid that an open discussion of racism might offend some students, and that as a result they might leave the class. Teachers had different reactions to this dilemma. Some teachers had questions and concerns about how to structure and facilitate discussions to deal with students' reactions. All the teachers who had racially mixed classes found that as a group black, hispanic and white students often responded differently to the same teaching material. For example, in one class the students read and discussed The Peter Grossup Story - a short story about a man during the depression who is faced with eviction after months of unemployment. The black students in the class described Grossup as a "snob" because he wasn't comfortable standing on the welfare lines with blacks. The white students in the class responded by saying that "of course" he would feel uncomfortable since "he had been a working man all his life."

*Georgette Darwin, member of KJAC (Kensington Joint Action Council) in The Edison School Story published in the education unit of Women in the Community

In light of this difference in perception and allegiance , the teacher felt that the discussion was potentially too volatile; that there was an implicit racist assumption being made by the white students -- blacks are disproportionately on welfare lines because they are lazy and don't work . She was reluctant to challenge students' stereotypes about welfare recipients without specific methodology, and terminated the discussion. She returned the following day with an article from the manual about welfare myths, but found the article which did not deal with students' experiences, ideas, and stereotypes ,to be totally inadequate. The article, which described national statistics about welfare recipients had little in common with observations or personal experiences of students living in Kensington/Fishtown. At a teacher's meeting, when the teacher shared her dilemma, it became apparent that there simply wasn't enough information available. Because she had avoided the discussion, she had been unable to stimulate discussion or effect resolution on the actual issues. As a result, the messages she got from the white students in her class and their analyses of Peter Grossup were at best ambiguous. Were they saying that the man was uncomfortable because he was out of work and had too much pride to accept welfare? Were they saying that he was uncomfortable because he was the only white man on line (did the story say that, or was that their own speculation?) Were they saying that the man felt uncomfortable being associated with people out of work - specifically blacks out of work?

This experience was not unique--other teachers shared similar reactions about their fears and understandable hesitancy in using curriculum materials that they felt were volatile or which might prove offensive to some students. Two contradictory issues emerged from these discussions: 1) many teachers questioned whether, in fact, it was appropriate to explore a potentially explosive topic - particularly racism - in the classroom. Some people argued that the best way to break down racial stereotypes was through personal contact in the classes, and that in this case, the role of the teacher was to minimize differences so that students could benefit most by the experience; 2) the teachers pointed out that the curriculum materials needed more detailed teaching suggestions about how to deal with explicit and implicit myths, stereotypes, or racist concepts which might arise in class. Despite the racial imbalance of the class, some teachers felt that they must challenge and confront racism positively and directly.

Approach #2 : Multi-Cultural Awareness In-Services

The second step in exploring the effects of the program's isolation and inclusion of racism as a classroom issue was built on teachers' previous experience working collectively to resolve classroom problems.

The curriculum specialist planned six teacher in-service sessions to explore guidelines for developing curriculum materials which would examine students' experiences with stereotyping and racism in their

lives .(These guidelines are discussed in chapter 2). The goals of the in-services were to: a) identify and analyze the differences between and similarities among students; b) examine how stereotyping and racism had affected teachers' own lives; c) develop teaching materials combining skill development with multi-cultural awareness; and d) revise materials in the Women in the Community manual. (The process, materials, and reactions to each in-service are explained in the Appendix).

This double approach - linking with a neighboring non-white organization for developing curriculum materials geared towards special target populations, and 2) designing teacher in-services to deal with racism as a classroom issue - laid the foundation for the multi-cultural awareness project.

CHAPTER II - A Curriculum Development Process for Learning in the Community.

> "Critical learning aids people in knowing what holds them back; it encourages them to envision a social order which supports their humanity."
>
> Ira Shor, Critical Teaching and Everyday Life

Women in the Community:

Classroom goals in the adult basic education program have always been to develop and strengthen basic skills - reading, writing and analyzing - by using curriculum materials that are drawn from students' experiences and daily concerns. The challenge of combining basic skill development with content that explores the problems and negative and positive aspects of life in Fishtown/Kensington, was the impetus for a curriculum development project called Women in the Community.

Upon joining the staff, the curriculum specialist initiated a three step approach involving teachers, students, and community residents in the curriculum development process.

Step 1: Interviewing

The curriculum specialist spent three months interviewing students, teachers, Women's Program staff, community residents and activists to identify what, to them, were imperative issues for female residents in the community. She asked them to identify: 1) the skills neighborhood people felt they lacked; 2) endemic problems of living in the area; and 3) what measures were being taken by community groups or organizations to alleviate generic problems.* Based on the common threads in people's interviews, four major themes were identified: education, parenting, unemployment, and women's health.

*This approach was inspired by the work of Brazilian organizer and educator Paulo Freire. He suggests that there are certain "generative themes" or words that symbolize the experience of people in different communities. He presents an approach to learning that encourages students to reveal the themes in their lives as the basis for curriculum materials. Teachers then present these themes to students in the form of "codifications"--concrete depictions of issues, such as pictures, for students to examine and analyze. For example, after discovering that the production of bricks was a central activity and the livelihood of people in a village, he presented a picture of a brick. Based on that single picture, people discussed many aspects of social relations and culture in the village that revolved around the making of bricks.

Step 2: The Manual

Each theme was developed into a unit of curriculum materials which posed a series of contradictions and problems for students to discuss. The parenting unit, for example, explored a wide range of conflicting experiences that parents share, ranging from absolute love and devotion, to total exasperation, frustration, and sometimes violence. While for some communities, a "generative theme" might reflect the kind of work people do, today in Fishtown/Kensington the effect of losing one's job has assumed paramount significance. The unemployment unit examined economic issues which resulted in "run-away" shops and factories and presented life experience stories of people who are faced with the reality of long-term unemployment. Thus, each unit presented a variety of issues that people encounter in their daily lives. As a whole, the manual explored the interconnected causes for different issues and problems confronting community residents.

The curriculum materials were used as tools to stimulate discussion and skill building. The materials were varied, including pictures, short stories, dialogues, key words, songs, role plays, cartoons, free writings and articles that would spark dialogue between students and teachers. The manual also included teaching suggestions for generating discussion and for developing specific skills such as reading comprehension, grammar exercises or vocabulary development. Free writing topics were suggested, allowing students to generate self-identified curriculum materials to be shared with other classes. "Discovery" questions were presented for students and teachers to facilitate exploration of neighborhood resources and to establish contact with local groups and organizations. (For example - "Ask members in your family, people on your block, people at your church, or other friends living in Philadelphia what they know about Edison or Kensington High School;" or "What happens when a house becomes vacant or is abandoned?" Call KJAC (Kensington Joint Action Council) to find out about real estate speculators and banks in Kensington, and what they are doing about the housing situation?" or "Ask people that you know who worked at Stetson Hat Co., Nicholson File, or Bayuk Cigar what they thought about the plant shutdowns. Ask them what they thought at the time, and find out what they are doing now.")

Step 3: Teacher In Service Sessions:

The curriculum specialist organized monthly planning meetings for teachers to explore multiple methodologies for integrating skill development with content drawn from students' lives. The approach discussed in the meetings drew largely on the pedagogy of Paulo Freire, but also included examples from student-centered language arts and values clarification materials. Teachers shared their experiences using the Women in the Community materials, and the curriculum specialist presented general guidelines for teachers to assist them in the development of their individual curriculum materials. (These guide-

lines are explained on pgs. (15-23). In addition, the materials and teaching approach were presented at two larger meetings with students, teachers and community activists involved in Kensington Joint Action Council (KJAC - a local organization working on the issues of housing, racism, and crime and safety). In these sessions, participants discussed alternative utilization of "codifications" as educational and organizing tools, and subsequently generated supplementary materials about current community issues (See Appendix for two examples of "codifications" that came out of these meetings).

The curriculum development process used in creating the Women in the Community materials maximized student and teacher input, and gave people in the program a common project to share. However, since every teacher has his/her own style and developed an individual and personal relationship with the class, the process was inexact. In fact, each time that teachers "invented" and "reinvented" learning materials they discovered new data about themselves, students, and the world around them. While there is no formula or recognized set of techniques for learning in the classroom, there are general guidelines for designing curriculum materials which reflect students concerns.

Guideline #1: Listening

Each student brings unique and individual experiences to the classroom. Convincing students to share their experiences is not always easy--particularly if students and teachers do not feel safe or comfortable in the classroom. Mutual trust and respect are perhaps the most essential element for dealing with issues drawn from students' lives. Acute listening and basic respect for students' own skills and experiences are mandatory. A good listener does not subordinate the students' issues to her/his own, but skillfully draws out the issues that students raise. Whether teachers see themselves as authorities on knowledge or as facilitators of knowledge is not simply a matter of personal pedagogical philosophy--it affects their ability to listen. All teachers, as facilitators, must be critically aware of their own listening process in the classroom, and how it affects their relationship to students. The most essential ingredient in learner-centered education is a commitment to teaching and learning as a mutual, cooperative process. Careful listening is one way to stimulate cooperation.

Good listening not only establishes mutual respect and trust, it is also crucial to the identification of students' concerns. Once teachers know their students and learn to listen sensitively to their reactions, responses and shared experiences, they can begin to develop curriculum materials or "codifications" that draw on students' individual and group needs.

Students' concerns can be represented in a photograph, dialogue,

illustration, movie, role play, song, collage, life experience, story, free writing assignment, or any exercise which raises conflicting themes for the class to discuss. When teachers have listened carefully they can present "codifications" which pose complex, contradictory issues for students to explore. A codification should not have an "easy" solution; if it does, it then fails to accurately and objectively represent the problems people face. Identifying common problems or issues in a class is the most difficult and challenging part of the curriculum development process; successful identification requires skillful listening from each teacher.

Teachers can experiment with different techniques for encouraging listening in the classroom. (Each of the following mechanisms is more fully explained in the Appendix materials on each in-service session).

1) Brainstorming encourages students to freely associate their ideas, opinions, or feelings. Brainstorming can be used to spark discussion about a particular story or article with a question like, "What words come to mind about the article?"; or "What is happening in the story?"; or "How do you think the character feels in the story?" The teacher facilitates the brainstorm by writing students' responses and reactions on the board, being careful not to change any words or meanings. The major principal of brainstorming is that it offers everyone the opportunity to participate and to introduce new ideas--the more ideas the better.

2) Key Words exercises are more structured than brainstorming. Students are asked to list a number of words that answer a particular question posed by the teacher to introduce a topic. For example, "List five words that are the keys to good health," or "List five words that describe the main character in the story." Everyone is asked to share key words - which can ensure more student involvement than group brainstorming. The teacher writes everyone's words on the board and calls for class examination of the words as a whole. Students are then asked to analyze the words by placing words with similar meanings into categories or by prioritizing the most important concepts on the board. This exercise draws on students' own ideas for developing analytical skills.

3) Free Writing encourages students to express themselves and their ideas more privately. Free writings are not concerned with grammar, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, or anything that could interfere with the flow of students' thoughts. For many students, writing,and consequently their own thinking is blocked when they are worried about correctness, neatness, or what they think the teacher wants to hear. Free writings can initiate dialogues between students and teachers and also among students if the writings are shared between partners or read aloud in class.

4) Affinity grouping encourages small group discussions. Each group is asked to generate a statement about their common ideas or experiences. Small groups are less intimidating, and therefore can often create an atmosphere of intimacy which usually fosters more candid discussion and fuller participation. This method is particularly useful in classes where there are clear divisions of opinion between students. The groups can either bring students with diverse opinions together, or focus on the particular issues and concerns of empathetic sub-groups within the class.

The techniques described above share three goals - a) to encourage maximum student involvement and participation; b) to improve teachers' and students" mutual respect and listening skills as people share their ideas and experiences; and 3) to generate knowledge and experience among students and teachers that can be used as curriculum topics.

These techniques do not suggest that students will not need additional information about subjects or skills covered in class, or that teachers are absolved from the responsibility to teach. These methods, in fact, should be used as catalytic tools for teachers to broaden the base of students' knowledge. Teachers who are aware of students' reference points, their conceptual frameworks, or how they see themselves in the world, are more able to develop challenging and relevant curriculum materials. This is particularly important for adult students who have unilaterally developed their own theories and explanations based upon years of personal experience - but often without the benefit of other perspectives and information.

Paulo Freire tells a poignant story about the power of listening. When Freire was developing materials for teaching literacy in the countryside, he spent a great deal of time talking about religion with Brazilian peasants. He was aware of the strong influence that Catholicism had among the people of his country, but he did not know how it shaped their analysis of the world. A peasant explained to Freire that although he worked hard every day on the farm, he was still poor because God meant it to be so. Freire, after hearing this same explanation from different farmers, asked "What kind of God is it that you believe in?" The farmer answered, "A God that is just and fair." Freire then asked, "What kind of just, fair God would let one of his children work hard every day and have nothing, while another child did no work, but lived off the food produced by the first?" Instead of superimposing his own analysis of poverty in Brazil on the peasants, he began to teach by first listening to the farmers themselves. He sought to identify a common pattern in their thought, and then exposed a contradiction in the farmers' own understanding of their condition.

Guideline #2: Naming the Problem and the Skills

Inherent in the process of developing codifications drawn from students' experiences, is the identification of skills or tools which students need to critically examine and analyze the materials. Persuading students to "name the problem(s)" in codifications utilizes the same skills as finding the main idea or discovering subthemes in a story. The skills required for an analysis include: word recognition, vocabulary, reading comprehension, inferential reasoning, comparing and contrasting conflicting information, establishing point of view, and organizing or categorizing information. Teachers use many and varied techniques to encourage student progress from describing a story to analyzing it. In every method, the goal is to move beyond an explanation of the events, characters, and context of a reading to an understanding of the underlying issues or themes.

As part of the original Women in Community materials, the curriculum specialist introduced a four step process for teachers and students to catalog and analyze information. For each codification, students were asked to establish the facts in the story, article, picture, etc. Facts included one level of basic comprehension: the who, what , where and when of a situation. The second step was to determine what the author or reader could infer from the codification. For the purposes of this exercise, inferences that were drawn from a story had to be based on facts that were stated in the story . (This step was particularly important in preparing students to take the GED test . The GED exam requires that students make inferences based solely on the facts presented in exam passages, and not on previous knowledge or experience.) The third step was to discuss speculations people could make based on their own experiences or information they had. Differentiating between inferences and speculations often raised the issue of viewpoint in the story--what is the author's point of view, vs. what do students think? The final step was to identify the tone of the picture or story. This step focused on how students felt while reading and discussing a codification. This step was particularly helpful in making a link between a codification and a student's actual experience, and for unearthing rich new sources for additional curriculum themes. Identifying the tone of a story is a primary required skill for the GED exam, therefore many teachers found this step would provide a valuable tool which they could use to develop and enhance test-taking skills. The most important aspect of this four step brainstorming process, (See pg. 43 for a chart) on fact, inference, speculation, and tone was the facilitation of discussion about the contradictions in the codifications and identification of the problem being posed.

In this teaching process, there was no misleading distinction made between the content of the codification and the skills needed to understand or analyze the content. The approach combined teaching content and skills, which encouraged students to discover for themselves the relevance of what they learned. However, since most teaching

approaches separate skills from content, teachers in the program were not always convinced that the approach made sound educational sense. As one teacher explained, she was always struggling between "teaching the material vs. teaching the students." This dilemma was most pronounced for teachers who experienced a conflict between preparing students for the GED test and preparing students to be "critical thinkers". This dilemma was resolved by the adoption of the teaching approach and materials designed by the curriculum specialist and presented at in-service sessions. The materials were designed to develop specific skills and content that could address the immediate needs and desires of students in class. For many students, preparing for the GED test was their immediate motivation for enrolling in class. Consequently, the teaching approach and materials had to include specific skills for taking the test, such as filling out multiple choice questions, working under a time limit, and overcoming test anxiety. The bottom line for the curriculum development process was that it: a) refined students' ability to critically analyze the world around them; and b) enhanced their ability to deal with different realities--both outside the classroom and within it.

Guideline #3: Unpacking the codifications:

As part of the in-service sessions, teachers mutually shared their perceptions about students' reactions to the materials. While these sessions were instructive, teachers expressed the need for more concrete guidelines to progress beyond individual stories and experiences presented in the codifications. In response, the curriculum specialist presented five (5) general steps for unpacking the codifications and expanding beyond students' own individual framework. These steps were not to be taken as exercises that followed in sequence after each codification. Rather, they were intellectual checkpoints or progressions for ensuring that each aspect of the problem-posing method was addressed.

Five Progressions for Using the Problem-Posing Approach:

1) Ask students to describe exactly what is happening in the story, dialogue, photograph, or whatever the codification is. This step is a basic comprehension process.

2) Ask students to identify the problems or issues that are being presented. One way to focus on the issues may be to have students discuss how the characters feel and why they feel this way. Another way to focus discussion is to follow the fact, inference, speculation tone sheet on page 43.

3) Ask students to apply this issue or problem to their own lives. Ask students if they have had similar experiences, or if they have ever felt the same way. This step should not result in a total diversion from the material, but should offer students an opportunity to share, compare, and contrast their experiences with those being presented.

4) After students have shared their experiences, identify the similar concerns and common patterns that exist. Suggest missing information that goes beyond the students' individual experiences. This is where additional materials and analysis are crucial to broadening discussion and analysis, by placing personal experiences within a larger framework. This step requires more time and more materials from the teacher-facilitator.

5) Ask students how the issues or problems in the codification or in a series of codifications can be changed or resolved. List as many as possible of their solutions on the board. Most educational materials present students with life as it is, rather than as it could be. As a result, people rarely get the opportunity to discuss alternative options or visions for change. Without discussions that search for alternatives, people can be blinded to change or even the possibility of change in their own lives and conditions. Teachers can direct students to resources available within their own community, and can encourage students to identify how people have resolved problems in the past. (The Edison School Story is one example of a codification in the manual that describes how some people in the Kensington/Fishtown community worked together to combat racism in the city's school system).

CHAPTER III: Multi-Cultural Awareness, A Problem-Posing Approach

The curriculum development process for learning in the community, which originated in 1980, laid the groundwork for the multi-cultural awareness project of 1981. The teaching approach and materials were incorporated into both aspects of the new project: 1) linking with neighboring non-white organizations to develop meaningful curriculum for hispanic women; and 2) presenting multi-cultural awareness in-services for teachers to develop exploration of students' experiences living in a multi-racial city. Each aspect of the new project built on previous curriculum development work thus complementing and enriching both the materials and the method.

Developing Curriculum Materials for Special Target Populations - Hispanic Women.

In the fall of 1981, a teacher was hired to teach a GED class at the Lighthouse for hispanic students.She was familiar with both programs and had previously taught at the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program. She had used the Women in Community materials in GED classes throughout the city; had taught hispanic students in the past; and had developed through her experience, facilitation skills in a learner-centered educational process. The teacher was enthusiastic about the curriculum project, but articulated concerns about her role as a non-hispanic teacher, which reinforced traditional bi-lingual educational classism by placing a white in an authoratative position over a group of non-whites. Her concern was based on a belief that teachers from the community may be better able to develop curriculum materials drawn from students' experience than an outsider. However, in a student-centered curriculum development process, there is no way to ensure that a teacher will always make the right decision or give the most appropriate response to students - regardless of his/her cultural or racial background. Keen sensitivity, an open mind, and the flexibility to change direction on the basis of student reaction, are part of a listening process which all teachers must develop in order to successfully address important student concerns.

The teacher expressed a secondary concern about her role in the project. A pivotol part of her job was to forge a link between the Lighthouse Hispanic Women's Program and the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program. Her class "belonged" to both programs and was to have access to all the activities offered at both sites. She was encouraged to attend the in-service sessions and she met regularly with the curriculum specialist to prepare materials. The fact that her salary did not reflect these additional responsibilities meant that the project depended upon her voluntary, unpaid efforts beyond the scope of her contractual requirements. For any future efforts at comprehensive linkate with other organizations, it would be imperative to re-evaluate and re-examine these initial concerns, incorporating

them into modifications for future programming.

The Lighthouse Class

From the start, the task of developing curriculum for hispanic women assumed that students in the class would be homogeneous. This assumption proved to be erroneous. People who enrolled in the class were both very similar to but very different from other hispanic students at the Lighthouse. As a group, they were second generation Puerto Rican women and were younger overall than students in the Spanish speaking GED class or the ESL class. While many of them had lived in Puerto Rico and still had relatives on the island, most of their lives had been spent in America, and most of them had been raised in North Philadelphia. Transition from one country to another meant that they had developed a dual set of values, stemming from their experiences in Puerto Rico and on American streets. In terms of their academic skills, the class tested at a pre-GED level, with students reading between a 5th - 8th grade level. Because the students' primary goal was to pass the GED test, they needed intensive instruction for basic skill development.

As a group, the class was also very heterogeneous. This class was atypical; few people shared similar assumptions--students reacted very differently to the materials being developed or presented from the Women in Community manual. This presented a striking departure to the teacher. She had used the same materials in other settings with both black and white students; and had found that in other classes, students' reactions and responses were more shared as a group--black students often responded one way and white students another way to the same story. The teacher identified four sub-groups of similar people early in the semester who often shared similar reactions and ideas: a) a group of students who knew each other prior to enrollment in the class. These students came to class to learn and to socialize; b) a group of students who shared similar expectations for a "better" life and social mobility; c) an older group of students, in their thirties, who had jobs; and, d) a small group of black women. In light of these differences, the teacher struggled to build group cohesion. She experienced difficulty in developing strategies to identify "generative themes" of hispanic women in her class that would address the concerns of each sub-group.

Identifying Emerging Themes:

Despite these differences, recurrent themes did develop. One classroom tension surfaced at the very start of the class. During each class some students who expected to utilize traditional GED textbook materials resisted experimentation with the Women in Community materials. While the teacher was convinced that important skills were being developed while examining codifications or doing free writing exercises, the students did not share the same perspective. They requested more rote

work sheets and were reluctant to discuss stories without multiple choice questions to answer. When discussions did erupt, facilitation was difficult.

The first two meetings between the curriculum specialist and the teacher, dwelt primarily on this dilemma--how do you balance students' expectations for a more traditional,formal, hierarchical and rote learning process, with the teacher's desire to present alternative materials and methods for learning? The curriculum specialist suggested that the teacher explore possible alternatives by encouraging students to share their past educational experiences. She suggested that the examination of students ' past relationships with teachers and schools, might uncover an important clue to the dilemma. This set in motion the identification of Theme #1; Exploring Educational Histories. For this theme, the teacher decided to present a series of three assignments. The first was a free writing exercise on the importance of education; the second was an interviewing project for interested students about their past school experiences; and the third was a free writing on the question: "Where have you, or others you know gotten an education besides school?" . These three assignments unearthed a wealth of information and material to be used in class and were later incorporated into the Women in the Community materials.

During the interviews, the teacher discovered two common issues that affected students ' skill development and educational expectations. 1) She learned that many students had attended school--mostly grammar school--in both Puerto Rico and America. She found that schooling differed greatly between the two countries; that Puerto Rican schools were much more traditional and authoritarian than public education in America. Students saw Puerto Rican education as better because it was more disciplined. (As an aside, the teacher noticed that students schooled primarily in Puerto Rico had stronger basic skills). Consequently, students expected that "good" teachers were more formal and authoritarian, more inclined to "teach at" than "learn with". 2) She also learned that for many students the language barrier had created a critical stumbling block in their education. One woman explained, "I knew a lot of things in Science when I came to American school, but I didn't know the English words." (See Appendix for student interviews).

Additionally, she found that students shared a more ecumenical viewpoint about education and how a person learns than was evident at first. Based upon students' responses to assignment #3, she concluded that many people saw their activities at church, traveling to Puerto Rico and learning about their own culture, as valid educational experiences. (See Appendix). This last assignment led to the development of Theme 2: Exploring Puerto Rico - Its History and Its Relationship to the U.S.

For this theme, five codifications were developed by the curriculum specialist and revised by the teacher. Two of the codifications presented historical background and current information about Puerto Rico in an essay format with an accompanying set of multiple choice questions. These materials were formal and structured but generated a vivid discussion in class--particularly the article on the Spanish American War. (See Appendix 66). Two other codifications explored the experience of migration from one country to another. In a short essay entitled, "Grandma, Please Don't Come," a woman born in Puerto Rico urges her grandmother not to come to America. This assignment also erupted into lively discussion--the class was not in agreement about the conflicting experiences of leaving one's homeland. Many students shared their dreams and visions for a future in America that was filled with increased and more diverse opportunities, both personal and professional. The teacher then asked the class to write a letter encouraging a relative to come to America. While at first, it appeared that the story had not spoken to students' ideas about America, through dialogue their common experiences and concerns were identified. Students shared similar stories about their own grandparents' difficult experiences moving to America. Some students related how their grandmothers had left their homes in order to be close to their families. When their children had gone back to Puerto Rico to find work, some grandmothers had been too ill to travel and were left alone in a strange land with an unfamiliar language. Migratory experiences of different generations sparked student interest.

The fifth codification was an advertisement by Union Carbide, encouraging other American companies to invest in Puerto Rico. This codification proved to generate the most shared, collective reaction. Students discussed the ad, comparing their own descriptions of Puerto Rican people to Union Carbide's stereotypical description. Students' experiences, visiting or living in Puerto Rico, and their knowledge about factories on the island, greatly spurred their ability to uncover hidden meanings within the ad, and critically examine and analyze its message to other companies.

The third theme emerged after the class had participated in one of the Lighthouse activities. An ESL class had presented a skit that had captured everyone's attention and enthusiasm at a program event. When the class next met, students asked if they could develop a skit. The teacher was enthusiastic, and encouraged the class to present the skit at both the Lighthouse and at an upcoming event at the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program. For weeks the class grappled with an issue and story line that would be both serious and humorous. They realized that presenting their skit for both programs meant performing in English and Spanish. While this was not difficult for the class, since most students were bilingual, it did present problems for an audience that didn't speak both languages. This discussion lead the group to explore Theme 3: The effects of being

bi-lingual and bi-cultural in America. As one way to generate a story line for the skit, students did free writings about learning English in America. After weeks of sharing stories and examining free writngs, the class decided on a skit about one student's granny who made herself understood, despite a language barrier. (See Appendix). One of the most important advantages of working on the skit was that it built cohesion among different students in the class. In fact, it was during the work on the skit that the issue of racism first emerged in the class. One woman described an experience when she started speaking English to another woman she assumed was black. The woman responded to her in Spanish saying, "Why don't you speak to me in our common language?" As she told the story, the woman grew more and more uncomfortable, occassionally looking at the black women in the class. She explained that she didn't want to offend anybody by her comment. The racial differences among students in the class and their different experiences living in America, while initially uncomfortable, gradually became the focus for the most important exchanges between students in the class. (See Appendix for a codification that was developed to relate to this issue.)

These "generative themes" grew out of an interactive process among students and between students and the teacher. Exploring common and difficult experiences and concerns not only brought the class together as a self-identified group while breaking down individual isolation, but created materials that can now be shared with others. The process challenged students' expectations for a more traditional learning situation. As students produced material they could claim as their own, they grew more comfortable with an informal learner-centered process. Students strengthened and developed their skills by experiencing, rather than by memorizing or drilling the content. Finally, both students and teacher expanded the boundaries of their learning situation, making space to discover, analyze, decide, think, and act on the relevance of what was learned.

Multi-cultural Awareness In-Service Sessions

Teacher meetings have always been a regular part of the adult basic education program. In-service sessions on curriculum development were initiated in 1980, as a way to involve teachers in the creation of materials and to reflect on various learner-centered teaching techniques. Since teachers had different educational backgrounds and teaching approaches, these sessions made it possible for people to learn from each others' experiences, and to experiment with materials and methodology designed by the curriculum specialist. Perhaps the most important function of the in-service sessions was to build group cohesion among the teachers, and to dispel the isolation of the classroom. Through in-services, teachers were made to feel an integral part of a programmatic effort at providing a mutual, cooperative, learner-centered process in the classroom. With one year of curriculum development experience, the teachers and curriculum specialist began

the multi-cultural awareness project.

A learner-centered curriculum development process involves more than designing course materials--it also requires a careful examination of teaching approaches and classroom organization. Since we have all grown up in a racist society, it is likely that teachers demonstate certain inherent prejudices and therefore behave in ways that are unintentionally discriminatory within the classroom. The curriculum development process must encourage teachers to examine their classroom behavior--particularly the way they group students, evaluate them and select curriculum materials. Teachers must also be aware of differences among their students and how students' cultural and racial backgrounds can affect their learning style and values. In order to initiate this process, teachers need to examine their own experiences with racism and discrimination in the larger society. Until teachers recognize the effect of racism in their own lives, they will remain unable to objectively analyze their classroom behavior and correspondingly will be unable to help students to investigate personal experiences with racism.

The purpose of the multi-cultural awareness in-service sessions was to bring teachers together to: a) share their own feelings, experiences, fears, myths, stereotypes, and prejudices; b) examine their teaching approach and classroom organization; and c) develop a teaching approach that enables students to strengthen their analytical skills and build a framework for understanding their own experiences with racism. (The goals, materials, process, and reactions to each in-service are included in the Appendix under Techniques).

Sharing feelings: Stimulating teachers to share their experiences in the classroom is usually an easy task. Most teachers are anxious to break the isolation of their individual classrooms and discuss common problems, doubts, and frustrations. This technique is essential for self-evaluation and for constructive reflection on the overall goals of the program. However, to progress from discussing teachers' roles in the classroom to sharing teachers' personal experiences with racism requires sensitivity and skill. One of the most challenging aspects of the multi-cultural project was to develop trust among the teachers so that they might engage in candid dialogue with one another. This process was complicated by the fact that the coordinator was new to the program, as were some of the teachers. While most of the teachers had been working together for two to three years, the group as a unit was unsure of itself. As a result, the first three in-service sessions focused on teachers' immediate needs to share ideas and information about: a) their roles as teachers; b) their students; and c) teaching techniques for learner-centered education. It wasn't until the fourth in-service that the group initiated an examination of their own experiences with racism. This in-service brought to light a wealth of information, as teachers exposed themselves to each other in significantly new ways. (See in-service #4 for the exercise which

generated this discussion).

Examining Teaching Approach and Classroom Organization: From the beginning, teachers shared their experiences in the classroom and their concerns about student progress. However, it wasn't until the project identified differences between students that teachers began to examine the positive possibilities in multi-cultural education. A topic that teachers once approached with fear and uncertainty, was now the source of exciting new potential. Most of the previous curriculum development work had focused on similarities among students and their common concerns. By consciously exploring students' differences, teachers became more aware of cultural and racial divisions in their classes. They sought ways to build on these differences rather than ignoring or avoiding them. During Session 5, after teachers had established a sense of trust with each other, specific classroom organization and teaching approaches that might inadvertently foster and perpetuate racial divisions were discussed. In this session teachers responded to a short story, In the Classroom, that presented them with a series of problems in a racially mixed adult basic education class. Teachers' reactions to this codification generated a lively dialogue about racism within the educational system; discrimination in the teachers' past educational experiences; and hidden forms of racism in their own teaching.

Developing Analytical Skills: A major thrust advanced in every in-service was that students could develop basic analytical skills by examining their own experiences with racism. In other words, multi-cultural education should not only provide students with information about different races or cultures, but it should aid students in constructing a framework for understanding the roots of prejudice, discrimination, and racism, and the covert and overt ways in which these messages are fostered. The skills that students develop through this process can assist them to think critically through the analytical and conscious discovery of what they believe and why they believe it. These same skills apply to learning how to read, comprehend, write, and take the GED test. The skills include: 1) distinguishing between fact and opinion, 2) comparing and contrasting one's own perceptions with the perceptions of others; 3) distinguishing between fact, inference, speculation, and stereotypes; 4) identifying and formulating appropriate generalizations and inferences based on fact rather than speculation, and 5) understanding different concepts such as stereotypes, prejudice, racism, and discrimination. The development of these analytical skills enhances students' ability to analyze their experiences, and as a result can help students to identify and confront their own prejudices.

This approach, coupled with the development of a means whereby students can share experiences, must ultimately encourage students to act positively on their values and beliefs, discarding or modifying those of questionable value and nourishing those which will foster affirmative changes in their lives. Teachers can and should aid students in the

identification of common concerns and the development of acceptable avenues through which they can put their shared values into action.

Finally, in-service sessions sparked issues and concerns that teachers carried into their lives outside the classroom. As one woman explained:

> I've been thinking for weeks about that last in-service. I lie awake at night thinking about things I should have said. I've even started thinking about my other jobs and my relationship with co-workers who are from different backgrounds. I really need more space and time to share all my new thoughts.

CHAPTER IV - Conclusions

The program's original commitment to education designed to empower students and teachers has been the major impetus for our curriculum development work. The attempts to involve students, teachers, Women's Program staff members, and community activists in creating the Women in Community materials and methodology confirmed the belief that community-based education can provide an important context for combining learning with community involvement. The multi-cultural awareness project magnified utilization of the community as a resource for learning. Through the development of curriculum materials, with a local non-white organization, the boundaries of "the community" were broadened and historical isolation fostered by segregation and discrimination was confronted. Both programs benefited from the exchange. The Lighthouse Hispanic Women's Program arrived at a programmatic decision to translate some of the materials and methodology into Spanish, and the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program incorporated the materials developed by the Lighthouse class into the Women in Community manual. Additionally, both programs benefited from the in-services. Teachers from the Lighthouse and the Women's Program shared and analyzed their experiences with racism with people from dissimilar backgrounds thus creating the opportunity for experimentation with innovative non-traditional teaching approaches.

Teacher Reactions to the In-Service Sessions:

Throughout the project, teachers continued ongoing dialogues, discussing their reactions to the in-services. Some teachers offered suggestions for initiated requests to the curriculum specialist for future meetings, while others shared stories from their classes with their colleagues and the curriculum specialist. At the conclusion of the project, teachers wrote about what they had learned:

> The in-services were very profitable to my own understanding about stereotypes that were lad on my by other people and those that were truly my own. I needed to be able to see myself as oppressed and as an oppressor to be able to move on from there. It was very moving to be with different types of people and to be able to share esperiences with them.
>
> I learned how much racism has affected me--in ways I never suspected--and how much it has shaped and influenced my thought patterns....The in-services also showed me a new way to teach by using key words and prioritizing them for students to build analytical skills. They also helped to de-sensitize me about "touchy" issues which I was afraid to even discuss previously in a classroom because of what might come up.

> The interactive nature of the in-services allowed an exchange of energies between all of us which always left me feeling "charged". I became rededicated to my goal of working towards providing a total educational opportunity for our students, rather than getting caught up in just covering "material" or spoon-feeding techniques. Being able to see that others feel the same way about their work reinforces the feeling that I'm in the right place at the right time. In a word one of the great values of the in-services is in MORALE.

> For me as a teacher the in-services were invaluable. We took very broad topics such as racism, and showed how it could be presented in a concrete way to students. The techniques were especially useful in that they drew from students' experiences and lifestyles rather than from educational backgrounds and past readings.

Ultimately, the success of any learner-centered curriculum development depends upon individual teachers'and students' willingness to participate in an unpredictable process. At the end of the last in-service, one teacher expressed her concern about the teaching approach:

> In some ways this method requires an amazing ability on the part of the facilitator. It looks easy--things work out perfectly in our sessions. But I'm afraid to use it with my students who could say anything.

In fact, a learner-centered approach requires a lot from everyone--the program, the teachers, and the students. A program interested in student-centered education must create special space and time for teachers to share their ideas and experiences in the classroom. For teachers the challenge is two-fold--being willing to take risks and make mistakes in the cooperative process of learning.

Many teachers feel that they are expected to be "super-teachers" no matter what teaching methods they use. As a result, they are often afraid to make assignments or lead exercises that could get out of control, or make them feel foolish. At the same time, if the goal is to encourage students to take responsible control of their own learning process, then teachers must be willing to take risks. Since there are no hard and fast rules or procedures for a learner-centered method, teachers can only learn and strengthen their skills as facilitators by trial and error in the classroom; making mistakes, and trying again. Carefully structuring an exercise so that everyone can participate is

a juggling act. With too much structure, dialogue gets short changed. Without enough structure, dialogue looses its substance. The structure teachers devise, whether in the form of lesson plans, curriculum materials, or codifications, must ultimately help students and teachers to create understanding and knowledge and to build skills together.

There was one lesson of primary significance learned from the in-services: the facilitator and teachers needed time to think about the key words and materials people were generating. The interim between the in-services was invaluable for the facilitator to identify patterns and categories in the work and to design ways for the group to decode their experiences. This reflection time must be built into any learner-centered teaching approach so that teachers and students have time to digest difficult materials. No one expects a class to understand and analyze their own experiences and history in one session. The error lies in not taking risks with difficult materials, and then not learning from our mistakes.

Curriculum materials which draw on students' lives must be dynamic, flexible, and full of options for students. The challenge for students in this kind of educational process is to overcome past experiences in classrooms and their own expectations of student-teacher relations. Just as most minorities have often internalized their oppression and developed self destructive ways of "making it" through the system, students also internalize their oppression in a classroom where teachers are authorities of knowledge. When adult students find themselves in non-traditional settings with learner-centered materials, they may not be ready to immediately discard their old expectations and behavior, in order that they can participate equally in the creation of knowledge. The advantage of a learner-centered approach that focuses on students' immediate needs, is that teachers can redirect the class whenever it is necessary, slowly building trust and cooperation. Through identification of themes and presentation of codifications, teachers must become more sensitive to students' reactions and responses. As one student explained after her class at the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program:

> I've gotten something from this class that nobody can take away from me. I was treated like an equal--by the students and the teacher. In today's world, that is not something I get to feel very often.

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APPENDIX MATERIALS

Techniques: Six In-Service Sessions: Program Goals, Materials, Process, and Reactions.

IN-Service #1

Goals and Objectives:

1. Development and practice of good listening skills.
2. Identify common themes about the role of teachers and their relationship to students.
3. Identify certain specific skills that can be developed through the "free writing method."

Materials Needed:

1. Handout A: Photographs on Education (See P.34)
2. Chalkboard or newsprint with felt markers.
3. Pencils and paper

The Process:

1. Ask teachers to write for 10 minutes on what the pictures represent to them. They should not worry about grammar, spelling, sentence structure, or paragraphs. Encourage teachers to think freely and to write as much as comes to mind.

2. Each person reads aloud what they have written. As each person reads, the facilitator writes a list of key words or phrases that summarize or identify the main points of each writing.

3. After everyone has finished, the group examines the list. The facilitator asks the group to categorize the words and phrases into thematic groups. The point here is to identify common themes people wrote about.

4. After exploring the main points in people's writings, and identifying common themes, re-examine the list. This time focus on a number of "skill related" questions:

    a) Vocabulary Development - did everyone understand the words?
    b) Compare and Contrast - What was similar about everyone's writing? This raised the question of subject: What was the subject of all the writings, vs. what were the themes?
    c) Point of View - What was each person's viewpoint as they described what was happening in the picture?

Group Reactions:

After sharing their free writings and discussing steps 3 and 4,

the group observed three major issues:

1) all the writings expressed an inherent conflict between teaching and learning.

2) The writings fell into two key categories: half the group wrote about the picture as though they were students, while half the group wrote as though they were teachers. A few people wrote from both viewpoints.

3) For the group that wrote about students, the common themes were: feeling conflicted - the student wasn't sure whether he/she or his/her education was valid.

   The student was isolated and perhaps different from other students in the class.

   The student was bored and frustrated by the class.

For the group that wrote about teachers, the common themes were:

   Teachers were not sure whether to "teach the material or teach the people" or to "teach for the test or teach to learn."

   How differences between teachers and students affect the learning process.

All of these issues and themes were related to teachers' roles and their relationships to students in their classes.

REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION BY WORLD EDUCATION

In-Service #2

This session followed up on a theme raised in the previous in-service: how students feel in classes--their reactions and responses to the material.

Goals:

1. Discuss the importance of differences among students in the program.

2. Identify specific issues that interest students.

3. Translate these issues into topics for curriculum materials.

Materials Needed:

Chalk board or newsprint with felt markers.

Pencils and paper.

The Process:

1. Teachers take five minutes to think about their students, then write down as many things as they can about all the differences among students. Encourage teachers to think broadly and include: where they live, how much schooling they have, whether they have jobs and what those jobs are, sex, age, race, ethnicity, religion, marital status, number of kids, what they talk about....

2. Teachers prioritize their list--put the five most important differences among students at the top of the list.

3. Facilitator writes all the differences on the board.

4. Everyone examines the list and looks for differences among students that are mentioned more than once. Star the differences that lend themselves easily to curriculum topics.

5. Discuss why the group thinks it is important (or not important) to understand and analyze differences among studnets in their classes.

Group reactions:

1. The teachers listed a wide range of differences among studnets including:

.main language*	.aggressiveness	.independence
.reading level	.age	.unassertiveness*
.writing skills	.attitude*	.learning rate
.math skills	.parents/non-parents*	.cultural*

recovering from alcohol*
residence
esteem
attitude-whether cynical or not*
priorities between education and work*
sex
women married to unsupportive men*
public school vs Catholic school background*
work experience*
single parents*
different ideas on raising kids*
racial*

Upon hearing others teachers' words, many people remarked "Oh Yeah, how could I have forgotten about that one. That's really true in my class too."

2. Prior to the discussion of #5, teachers did not mention any positive aspects about differences among students. But when they discussed #5, the tone of the conversation changed and people agreed that a key ingredient in an exciting learning process is exploring people's differences. Teachers shared their views about the importance of integrated education, they expressed their concerns about the negative effects of racial differences, and how to make a class more cohesive as a group. Teachers also discussed their uncomfortable experiences using the materials in the Women in Community manual dealing with racism.

3. While discussing possible curriculum topics, one teacher shared a haiku that a student had written. She felt the poem fit in with some of the themes about being parents and dealing with kids:

Haiku

My home is noisy,
My children are playing house
I need peace and quiet.

This is an outstanding example of incorporating students' work into the curriculum development process.

In-Service #3 - 2 hours

In the last in-service, teachers listed age as a common difference among students in their class. The facilitator used this issue to introduce the concept and process of stereotyping.

Goals:

1. Identify and present materials for teachers to use in their classes.
2. Discuss combining skill development with content drawn from students' lives.
3. Introduce the concept and process of stereotyping.
4. Encourage teachers to share experiences dealing with stereotyping in their own lives.

Materials:

1. Handout A: A student poem, "The Roles I Play."
2. Handout B: A photograph on age; handout on facts, inference, speculation, tone and stereotype;
3. Handout C: Willie Evan's story.
4. Chalf board or newsprint and felt markers
5. Pencils and paper

The Process:

1. Facilitator asks the group to brainstorm on all the roles that they play (This brainstorm related to a common theme identified in session #2 - students particularly women, have many different responsibilities or roles that they assume outside of school.) Facilitator writes all the roles on the board.

2. Facilitator asks teachers to examine the list of words and comment about them. Encourage people to group similar words together and to look for relationships between the words. One teacher mentioned that many of the words were typically women's roles. For example the word secretary was listed, but not executive. Other people spoke about the wide range of activities outside the home that were listed. After a short discussion about the meaning of the words, someone mentioned that most of the words were nouns, while only a few were adjectives, and none were verbs. From this point teachers discussed all the possible skills exercises that could be devised including: grammar, analogies, vocabulary development, prefixes, suffixes, comparison and contrast.

   The facilitator passes out Handout A.

3. Handout B: Photograph on Age
   Group brainstorm on all the words that come to mind about the picture.

4. When all the words are listed on the board, the facilitator passes out Handout B - "Fact, Inference, Speculation, Tone Sheet." Ask the group to categorize the words listed into the appropriate column. Ask the group to identify words that are facts about the picture, and so on. The fifth step is to look for all the stereotypes that were made about the woman in the picture.

A fifth step was added to the original chart in order to incorporate multi-cultural materials. After discussing speculations, students are asked to translate some of their inferences and speculations into implicit or explicit stereotypes about people. This step was added as a concrete technique for students and teachers to examine the process of stereotyping and its basis in speculation as opposed to fact. Stereotypes can first be examined as a method of categorizing information (whether true or false), and later exposed as a thinking process which encourages racism and divisions among people.

5. Ask teachers to take five minutes and write a list of five stereotypes people have of them. Share the list, write them on the board and look for common stereotypes. Be sure to focus on two key issues about stereotyping.

   a) can a stereotype be complimentary?
   b) how do stereotypes make people feel?

6. Handout Willie Evans

Pass out the paragraph excerpted from a popular teenage romance book about Willie Evans. Discuss the passage and look for hidden meanings and stereotypes about the characters in the story. Be sure to focus on developing interpreting skills--skills that ehlp people to differentiate between what is being said and what is meant.

Group Reactions:

This two hour session gave teachers more time to explore combining skill development with content drawn from their own experience. The group started with stereotypes about age and sex in the picture, then, focused on the process of stereotyping: how people speculate and make inferences without sufficient facts.

Teachers were hesitant to trust each other at this point. The discussion of stereotyping focused monstly on how and why people stereotype others, rather than on the overwhelming negative effects caused by stereotyping.

HANDOUT A:

The Roles That I Play In My Family

I play the part as - mother.
I play the part as - doctor
I play the part as - wife.
I play the part as - housewife.
I play the part as - dressmaker.
I play the part as - dumb.
I play the part sometime as a troublemaker.
I play the part as - selfish to my husband.
I play the part as - grandmother.
I play the part as - fighter.
I play the part as - giving.
I play the part as - peacemaker.
I play the part as - helping the others in my family.
I play the part as - good mother.
I play the part as - a babysitter.
I play the part as - hairdresser.
I play the part as - plumber.

By Arlene J. Sharp
The Lighthouse GED class, 12-17-81

Example Exercises

Analogies: Choose words from the poem

doctor;plumber — peacemaker:fighter
dressmaker: _____ — _____:giving

Vocabulary Development: Change the endings of these words to change their meanings:

self_____ — selfless
Household — house____
help____ — helpful

Nouns and Verbs: Roles women play

I play the roles as a fighter.

I don't fight enough.

How are these words similar?
How are they different?

Make a list of verbs that can be turned into nouns:

I am his mother.

I mother him too much.

How are these words similar?
How are they different?

Make a list of words that can be both nouns and verbs:

Grammar Exercises: Fill in the blanks:

I play the role as _____.
noun

I sometimes feel _____
adjective

I _____ others in my family
verb

I used to feel _____, but now I feel _____.
adjective adjective.

HANDOUT B:

CHART FOR DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS/READING COMPREHENSION

Facts	Inferences	Speculations	Tone	Stereotypes

Handout C:

Excerpted from Dreams Can Come True (Wildfire)

In her new school, Ellynne, who is white, becomes best friends with Willie Evans," a tall, slim, exotically beautiful black girl." When Ellynne goes to Willie's house after shcool, the book says, "It was the second time she'd visited the Evans house, so she wasn't startled by their splashy use of reds, oranges, and yellows. At first sight she'd been too shocked to decide, but now she looked around Willie's brilliant orange and yellow bedroom with the zebra-striped rug and black and white checked bedspread and decided she liked it."

Teaching Suggestions for Dreams Can Come True

1. How is Willie Evans described?

2. What makes someone exotic? Why do you think the author used the term exotic to describe Willie?

3. How is Willie's room described?

4. What stereotypes of blacks are being described in the paragraph?

5. Are Willie Evans and her room described in a complimentary way? Make a list of other "complimentary" stereotypes about groups of people:

6. What do you think the effect of these kind of stereotypes are for the people involved?

In-service #4

In the last in-service, people had been hesitant to trust each other. The discussion of stereotyping was unthreatening. It focused on how and why people stereotype others, rather than on the overwhelming negative effects. The purpose of this in-service was to get teachers to open up more with each other.

Goals:

1. To examine teachers' own racial and ethnic identities before developing materials for students.

2. To introduce a "key word" exercise and its various uses in the classroom.

Materials:

Handout A: How to use key word exercises
Blackboard or newsprint with felt markers.
Paper and pencils

The Process:

1. Facilitator asks teachers to list five words that best describe themselves

   Facilitator asks if anyone has a question about any of the words listed (Some interesting discussion can develop as people explain their word choices)

2. Facilitator asks teachers to list five words that best describe themselves as a woman/man

   Follow same procedure as in step 1.

3. Facilitator asks teachers to list five words that best describe themselves as white/black

   Follow same procedure

4. After all the words are listed on the board and teachers take a few minutes to examine all three lists together, the group explores three questions:
   1) How did they feel while developing each list?
   2) Why did their list change from 1-2-3?
   3) Why did people have such a hard time describing themselves as white?

Group Reactions:

This exercise generated the most dynamic discussion to date in

the in-services. People shared their childhood experiences dealing with people of different races, and discussed their first experiences with racism.

The objective in this key word exercise was to become aware of how people think about themselves in terms of categories - specifically their racial category. Teachers talked about how they felt about being part of a category, and some of them explained how they had first become aware of their own whiteness/blackness. Since the group is mostly white, many teachers noticed that they never think of themselves as white. In fact, they assume and enjoy this privilege because they are white in a racist society. People shared "stereotypical" notions they had about blacks, and talked about the negative effects of white racism. Since there was only one hour alloted the key words were not fully examined. Teachers spent most of the time on step four, answering questions about the process and sharing experiences.

Handout on Key Word Exercises:

Keyword exercises can be used in the classroom for many different purposes:

1. To get students generating words and phrases about a topic they think they know nothing about. After a key word exercise the class can see how much they already know.

2. Key word exercises are perfect for basic readers - they can be used for word recognition, spelling, or vocabulary. Sylvia Ashton Warner used this method in her book, Teacher.

3. To ask students to name key words from a passage they have just read. After all the words that come to mind have been listed, the teacher helps students to categorize the words into main ideas about the passage. The process involves four steps:

    1) Take 10 minutes to free associate or brainstorm together as a group. Make a list on the board of all the key words or phrases that come to mind about the article or story.

    2) Take a look at the list and make sure that everyone knows the meaning of each word.

    3) Group together all the words which relate to one idea. List all these words which refer to the same point within the article into a category called "related" words.

    4) Based upon this list of "related"words, have the class suggest a sentence which ties these words together into a main idea from the article.

In-Service Session #5 - 2 hours

In the previous session, teachers began to share their personal experiences with racism. The fifth session was organized to explore these experiences in more depth, and to introduce a discussion about racism within classroom settings.

Goals:

1. Incorporate the experiences and knowledge of teachers in the Women's Program and teachers from the Lighthouse Hispanic Women's Program.

2. Make a clear distinction between three concepts we had been loosely using throughout the sessions--stereotype, prejudice, racism.

3. Explore our attitudes and experiences with racism in our teaching.

4. Introduce some teaching concepts drawn from Paulo Freire's work.

Materials:

1. Handout A - "Questions for Thinking About Attitudes Towards Race" developed by Eileen Abrams
   Handout B - "In the Classroom"

2. Chalkboard or newsprint with felt markers

The Process:

1. Group brainstorm - the facilitator lists all the key words that come to mind about the words: stereotype, prejudice, racism. Facilitator writes the words on the board.

2. Have teachers examine all three lists of words. Based upon the difference between each list, develop a definition for each word.

Our group had no trouble coming up with a coherent definition of stereotype and prejudice. But the struggle to agree upon a definition of racism that was satisfactory to everyone continued. Ultimately, two contradictory definitions were identified. (See In-service #6 for materials for the definitions).

3. Break into two small groups. Each group is given a copy of Handout A to discuss. Groups choose a scribe to report back to the larger group on their discussion. <u>The task is to keep a list of all the common experiences people have had dealing with racism</u>.

4. Report back to large group and list the commonalities on the board for everyone to see. Group examines the list and has a chance to comment.

5. The facilitator gives a short explanation of the preceding process "naming the problem" and defines the conflicts teachers have encountered in their daily lives. She describes some essentail guidelines drawn from Paulo Freire's work on teaching approach.

SHORT BREAK

6. Discussion of Handout B "In the Classroom" with five general guidelines attached. The goal of this step was to "unpack a codification" together as a group.

Some teachers felt they needed more information; others felt the teacher in the story had not handled the situation well; others mentioned their own experiences at being tracked in school.

Group Reactions:

There was too much material presented in this session. At the same time, people had been very engaged, and for the first time everyone talked and exchanged ideas. The discussion was filled with tension, confusion, some defensiveness and a series of suggestions for dealing with the proglem presented in the story.

The facilitator mentioned that we would need to tie up all the loose ends in the final session. There were significant issues that needed further examination:

1) There was a general consensus in the room that stereotypes were easy to define because at some point in everyone's life, they had been stereotyped in some way. The same was not true for racism.

2) The group had trouble defining racism--yet when people shared their personal experiences, there was a wealth of material to be worked into the definition which had not previously been incorporated.

3) Before Step 6, no one had mentioned anything about racism in their teaching. "In the Classroom" raised this issue, for the first time.

4) Ultimately the hardest task--trying to develop a more critical understanding and a broader perspective about racism and its effect on our own lives was just beginning. But the sessions were ending.

HANDOUT "A"

QUESTIONS FOR THINKING ABOUT ATTITUDES TOWARDS RACE

1. What kind of contact did you have with people of other races when you were growing up? Were they adults, children, playmates?

2. When were you first aware that there was such a thing as race and racial differences? How old were you? Can you recall any incidents? How did you feel?

3. How did you experience your own racial, ethnic or cultural identity?

4. How did you first experience racism? From whom did you learn it? What did it mean to you? How did it function in your perception of yourself? How did it make you feel ? How did it affect you in relation to other people?

5. When did you first notice yourself treating people of other races in a different way?

6. What did you learn at home about people of other races?

7. How did different groups of students get along in your school? Were you aware of divisions by race? How did it feel?

8. Who are the people in your life today, who are different from you racially, in both your personal and professional lives? What are those relationships like? How would you like them to be?

developed by

Eileen Abrams

HANDOUT "B"

In the Classroom

You have a class of five middle aged black women returning to school after at least 15 years; one young Puerto Rican woman born in this country, who has attended school in Puerto Rico and in the United States-she is bilingual; and six white women from Kensington who range in age from 24-45. You've been teaching this class since September. It is the beginning of January and everyone returns for the second semester.

The women in the class have a wide range of skills--no one works at exactly the same level, and you know that people will be ready to take their GED test at different times. However, the class does fall into general categories--one group, with a bit more work on grammar could take their test soon. The other group is much further behind and will need intensive work on grammar before they can even begin. The first group includes all but one white woman, and the second group includes everyone else. You decide to split the class for half the period and work individually with each group.

Since September you have been focusing on reading and grammar skills. Every week you bring in a reading that you think will be of interest. The class has lively discussions where everyone gets involved. Some of the discussions get more intense than you feel comfortable with--especially when it comes to issues about welfare, abortion, and crime. In fact, one of the white students stopped coming to class. You are told by her friend in the class that she got tired of hearing the black women always"mouthing off" and was going to go to a program where she could just quietly study for the test.

One evening you decide to read some articles on tracking in the schools. The class gets into a heated discussion about their own experiences being tracked. Most of the white students argue that tracking is good because students need to be with others who won't hold them back. As one woman explains, "At my daughter's school there are a lot of Puerto Rican kids who can't speak English very well. I don't think it is right for my daughter to be held back by these kids." Another white woman explains that her child was just placed in a class for learning disabled children and she thinks, although she is not sure, that maybe it is the best thing for him. She explains that he's always been slow, and she wouldn't want him holding any other students back. The black students disagree, and one black woman argues that tracking is used to separate blacks from whites in integrated schools. She says, "The highest track is always all white. I think tracking is actually racist." There is a long silence in the room until one white woman says, "Come to think of it I remember in my grammar school that I never used to see any of the black students because they were all in the lower tracks. I guess I just assumed it meant that we were just smarter than the black kids." The Puerto Rican woman is quiet for the entire discussion. The class is out of time and people start leaving to pick up their kids in childcare. You feel uneasy about the conversation.

Materials generated in In-Service #5

Definition of Racism

#1 Categorizing people by their racial group.Negative action towards a race (either physical or verbal): racism is based in fear, ignorance, and prejudice.

#2 Racism is when prejudice has power (therefore, people who don't have power, like the Black Panthers cannot be considered racists).

Key Words on Racism

militant
nazis
unreasonable
limiting
painful
based in fear
ignorance
denial
projection
death
stereotypes
Kensington/Fishtown
Northeast
Upper Darby
North Philly - ghetto
discrimination
government intervention - social programs
tolerance by law
patronizing
quotas
Mayor Rizzo
Ronald Reagan
Jim Crow
Supreme Court
KKK
Black Panthers
Black Muslims

Our Commonalities List: Our Experiences with Racism

1) Our first experiences had been negative
2) Physical distinction had been made on the basis of race - for example segregated bathrooms, tables and neighborhoods.
3) We had gotten our own identify from religion, family and school - sometimes other groups defined us as racially different.
4) We felt uncomfortable allowing racist comments to go on - we felt ashamed when we were quiet and didn't challenge these remarks.
5) Our experiences with racism had made us feel bad about ourselves in some way.
6) Racism had been portrayed to us through the media.
7) The blacks we knew or saw held menial positions - such as cleaning ladies or garbage men.
8) Our awareness came from cultural/ethnic feelings as opposed to religious or racial identity.
9) All felt isolated from other groups or from our own group.
10) Parents did not say negative things, but by denying racial differences they had practiced racism and left us unprepared to deal with differences.
11)Racism had become more of an issue when it crossed sexual lines.

Key Words: Our Descriptions of Ourselves by Race

*schooled
Jewish
*paranoid
*privileged
*ability to move
*straightish hair
white
Irish
German
Catholic
working class
*neighborhood resident
*semi-militant
confident
educated
*semi-hostile
*semi-arrogant
*very white actions (actions and behavior are stereotypically white)
*privileged
*tight
*overly rational
*oppressive
*black and beautiful
*denied
*unaccepted
*struggling
*educated some
*lack of exposure
Protestant religion
*angry
working class
*struggle
*isolated
*over protected
white
*non-prejudiced
Irish
lower middle income
born and raised Catholic

In-Service #6

In the past two in-service sessions, teachers had produced a great deal of material about their own experiences. The purpose of this last in-service was to re-examine the material and develop a more critical understanding of how racism affects people.

Goals:

1) Summarize all the previous materials covered

2) Practice different methods of analyzing key words.

Materials:
1) Definition of Racism
2) List of Key words on Racism — All from previous in-services
3) List of Our Commonalities
4) List of Our Description of Ourselves as white/black

Chalkboard or newsprint with felt markers.

The Process:

1) The facilitator asks the group to examine the "Definition of Racism" and the "Key Words on Racism" developed in the last in-service.

2) Facilitator asks teachers to categorize the key words on racism - group all the words that belong together or are related to each other in some way; and to name each category.

The group broke the words into the following categories and then added these aspects to their original definition :

---Where racism is located · Segregated neighborhods where racism is fostered. People argued that white racism is more overt in poorer neighborhoods like Kensington than in upper middle class neighborhoods like Chestnut Hill. In wealthier neighborhoods, racism still exists, just in a different form.

People also thought that North Philly-a black ghetto-did not belong in the list because we were really discussing white racism.

---Institutional Racism — legal methods and public policies designed by the government, which foster racism.

---Groups of people who signify, represent and perpetuate racism. This category was divided into three sub groups:

a) white supremists and therefore racists
b) black nationalists, but not racists
c) individuals who use their official position to encourage racism.

--- Emotional/Psychological responses to and causes of racism.

--- Other consequences and causes of racism

--- One word - death - didn't have a category, until one woman remarked "Ultimately, racism has and continues to result in death for many people."

The definition of racism had expanded greatly based on these new categories.

4) The facilitator asks the group to examine "Our Commonalities List" and add more aspects to the definition of racism. Teachers added 3 new aspects:

a) the economic roots of racism - its basis in American capitalist development and its present function.
b) Other institutions, such as the media, schools, and families that perpetuate racism.
c) The ways in which racism dehumanizes people-including the oppressors (whites), as well as the oppressed.

By the time we got to our last activity, people had talked about racism and its effects in an entirely new way. One woman said, "And to think we knew all of this already, but just couldn't explain it in our first definition."

5) The facilitator asks the group to re-examine "Key Word List of Our Descriptions of Ourselves by Race."

The facilitator explained that she saw two distinct categories in our list--descriptive words of who we are (like Jewish, white, Irish) and relationship words that describe how we feel in relation to whites or blacks (like paranoid, privileged, semi-militant). The facilitator asked teachers to pick out all the relationship words in the list.

After this exercise, the facilitator made four points before opening discussion:

1) The overwhelming number of relationship words indicated how pervasive racism is for all of us. While at first, the group had assumed that not everyone experiences racism, this exercise seriously challenged that assumption.

2) Some of the relationship words had to do with power and who has it in society. Therefore, any definition of racism had to include an

analysis of power.

3) Some of the relationship words had to do with structural divisions between races, which was also reflected in the definition of racism.

4) Finally, many of the words had to do with feelings about race relations and not about individual characteristics. In fact, the experience of racism in our society had even permeated the descriptions people had chosen to reflect their personalities.

Group Reactions:

After the last step, the group was silent. It took a while before anyone spoke. The first statement, which resulted in the most direct, open, and risk-taking dialogue was, "What surprises me about these words, is that no one said they felt guilty or remorseful about racism and its effects." That statement generated a lot of debate, which carried the group beyond the time allotted for the meeting.

As people left the room one woman remarked, "Tonight we 'named a problem' - I was sure it wasn't one of mine."

Codification #1 developed for the first in-service session with members of the Lutheran Settlement House teachers, students and KJAC (Kensington Joint Cation Council) members.

THE REAL ISSUE

Setting: A group of concerned mothers meet before negotiations with School Board members about exposed asbestos in a local school.

Sara: We need to have that stuff removed now. It frightens me to death that our kids are getting exposed to asbestos-you know it can kill them.

Jane: Yeah, but if we are going to be successful in presenting our arguments we are going to have to keep our cool. We can't come off like a bunch of hysterical women.

Ellen: Well, I don't even know if they are going to be able to rip the asbestos out. The School Board is broke right now. I heard it cost 6 million dollars to remove the asbestos from the Cinnaminson Schools in Jersey.

Barb: Well, I don't care how much it costs because you can't put a price on my kid's life.

Sara: All I want to say is that we're going to have to do better than emotional demands about our kids safety and come up with some concrete suggestions in their language, like "the cost benefit analysis of encapsulation, enclosure, and removal."

Setting: A few days later at a community meeting called by the principal of Hackett School, who for weeks has been refusing to take calls from parents, parents meet with the principal.

Principal: I'm so glad to see such interest in the welfare and safety of our children. I called this meeting together to discuss the options available to us to deal with the asbestos concern that many of you have raised. Since you have been so insistent upon the immediate dangers of asbestos to your children, we've decided to bus your children to a nearby North Philadelphia school, if you want us to. However, if you would prefer, we can keep your children in our school while we do further investigations. The school board expert assures me that the health problem is minimal, and wouldn't even be detected for years to come.

Barb turns quietly to Jane sitting next to her:
Bussing, forget it. I won't ever have my child bussed.

Jane replies:

> I have to disagree with you. If my Billy sits next to a black boy, the blackness isn't going to rub off on him. But if he stays sitting in Hackett school, that asbestos might rub off onto him and actually kill him.
>
> The women in the room start arguing about bussing among each other. But then one woman in the audience stands up and angrily challenges the principal saying:
>
> "Don't try to lead us away from the real issue."

Codification #2:

LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS

Scene I: An adult education class where students are preparing to take their GED tests.

Harriet: I think Reagan is really going to screw up the economy. Everything he's doing is just helping the rich.

Chris: Well I heard that Reagan is just getting rid of the waste and fraud in our welfare programs. Besides, what some people need is a good kick in the butt to get them working again. You know, the person who I really feel sorry for is the guy who is out there working hard and paying his taxes so that all these other people can be getting off easy.

Harriet: You can be sure he's not going to cut taxes for poor people, and I don't see how he's going to stop inflation. But I just don't think there's anything that we can do about it. In times like these, you have to look out for yourself and get your own stuff together.

Donna: But we've gotta do something about it. All of us get affected by the cuts. Reagan's provoking a war by building up the military, and if there's a war everybody will suffer. Besides, people have gotten rid of Presidents in the past.

Mary: Well, it wouldn't matter anyway, if we got rid of Reagan, because Busch or that crazy lunatic Haig isn't any better.

Donna: What we need is a poor people's majority to vote all those suckers out of office.

Jane: What really scares me is the moral majority--those people in Texas burning books. They have big money behind them. Poor people just don't stand a chance today.

Cathy: Yeah, and I heard that there won't be any more free legal services for people to fight for their rights in court either.

Pat: Well at least our program will get some of its funding back, and that's good.

The teacher interrupts: This is all very interesting and important, but we've really got to get down to business here and review the homework. The test is only three weeks away and we have a lot to cover.

Scene II: Mary returns home after class. She and her sister Tina are sitting in the kitchen having coffee.

Mary: All I know is that, the more you know, the more you are going to get by in this world. What makes me mad about these cuts is that I just got started on my education, and now Reagan is going to cut it. Maybe I'll scrape by and get my GED, but without college grants, I won't ever get to college.

Tina: Well, maybe it's just as well. When you think about it, you don't need an education these days, you need a job. People can't be wasting their time going to college learning about things that happened 100 years ago. A person today needs a skill, or on the job training, or something that can get her some money. You never know--maybe Reagan will be able to turn things around like he says he will; now that would help us get food on the table a lot better than any college class. Don't get me wrong, I'm not against education, I just think we have to be realistic.

LIGHTHOUSE MATERIALS

Educational Histories

There are many ways for adult students to explore their past experiences in school. Students can be encouraged to free write on topics such as, a) "What do you remember most about going to school?"; b) "What was your best(and/or your worst) experience in school?"; c) "What did you like (dislike) most about school?"; d) "Describe your school years--what were the teachers like, what were the students like, what subjects did you like (dislike)?". Students can also break into small groups to discuss these questions together, making sure to list all their most common and/or different experiences.

If there is time, students or teachers can interview each other using a tape recorder. This approach can be particularly effective for students who get easily blocked by writing, or who are quiet in group discussions. Many people have not had the opportunity to discuss and reflect on their past schooling. By conducting individual, in-depth, but loosely structured interviews, students and teachers can discover important clues about students' fears, strengths, expectations, or aspirations in the classroom.

The following passages are transcriptions from two student interviews. They are written in a format that flows from students own words and are easy to read.

Yolanda Medina

I went from kindergarten to third grade here.
Kindergarten and first grades were at one school,
and then from second to third, I went to Miller.
Then I went to P.R.
Then I came back here and I went to Miller
and finished sixth grade.
Then I went back to P.R. for seventh,
but finished seventh grade in Ohio.
Then I came back to Penn Treaty for eighth and ninth.

I remember, I had trouble coming back to school.
in sixth grade (in Philadelphia).
I used to know the answers, but in Spanish,
I couldn't say it in English.
So that's what got me confused.
And then, in P.R., I 'd know the answers in English,
But couldn't say it in Spanish.

The teachers didn't know what was going on,
because I didn't tell them.

They used to call me "Turista" in P.R., my teachers.
Because I used to come and go, come and go.
They said that over there I was going to learn in Spanish,
and over here, in English.
And they think it's better over there than over here.
They used to get mad at my father.

I'd always say, "I'm not going to pass."
But I'd always pass.
I'd get nervous and confused and scared.

When I went to Ohio, I didn't know anybody there.
I'd go to the room and do my work.
Then I'd leave.
I didn't want to bother nobody.

My classmates in eighth grade at Penn Treaty were smart.
They were smarter then me.
It didn't know that much, but they put me in that class.
I was nice, but it was hard.
We had finals; hard classes.
I hadn't had science over here, I'd had it in P.R.
But in Spanish.
So I knew scientific thermology--the names for things in science--
in Spanish.

Zenaida Cruz

I went to kindergarten and first grade in Puerto Rico
in the town of Haybonito.
Then, in second grade, we came to New York.
We stayed there for half a year,
then went back to Puerto Rico.
We came back and then went right back, to Haybonito.
We moved four times in second grade.
Then, in third grade, I was in Philadelphia the whole year.
At John Welsh school.
Then we went back to New York, we were there for fourth grade.
In New York, we lived in Brooklyn.
There are thirteen children in our family, all together.

For fifth and sixth grade, we were back in Philadelphia.
I went to John Welsh School again.
Seventh, Jones School, in Philadelphia.
Eighth and ninth grades, also in Philadelphia.
I dropped out and then went back and then dropped out.
I was in tenth grade for a couple of months.

I always had trouble understanding reading in English.
Everyone in my family speaks Spanish at home.
I knew how to speak English and would translate for my mother.

When I first went to school in New York,
I didn't know what they were talking about.
I never told nobody.
I was afraid.

Free Writing Topic: "Where have you (or others you know) gotten an education besides school?"

Student Free Writings:

I learn from my parents. They can go to the library and hang out. On the job training I learn by watching my grandmother. I also learn by looking at T.V. and traveling.

Helene Stoner

There are ways of getting an education besides school--traveling to different places, meeting people, even going to the library and reading books. But especially you can learn at home with your parents; going to historical places, visiting museums, talking about what happens around the world. Any piece of news would be interesting and a way to learn.

Victoria Cruz

I think that some people have gotten an education in churches where they have learned about their religion. They have read their Bible. People have learned at home too, because they have learned about their past and their culture. They have also learned about their past history. I think you can get an education just about anywhere, because anywhere you go you learn about something. Part of education is learning about something.

Ruth Rodriguez

You get an education by your husband, by your parents, by your children, by people on the streets and in your home. You can get an education by someone you know and talk to. Education is a very interesting word--you need to have it everywhere you stand, everywhere you go.

Zoraida Aviles

The Spanish-American War

It was February 15, 1898. In the harbor of Havana Cuba, the U.S. battleship Maine was at anchor. Cuba was then a Spanish colony struggling for its independence. The Maine was there on a "friendly visit". All seemed calm. A bugle had just blown "taps." The time was 9:40 p.m.

A second later there was a tremendous explosion. The Maine blew up! All the lights went out. Fire roared. Shells popped like firecrackers. The screams of wounded and dying men were heard everywhere. Some sailors jumped overboard--and were attacked by sharks. Within minutes the wreck of the Maine sank into the mud. Two hundred and sixty men were killed.

The Maine was blown up by a mine. That was clear. The question was, Who did it? No one knew. It is still a mystery. But angry Americans blamed the Spanish. Every day the newspapers screamed: "Remember the Maine!"

Many Americans wanted a war with Spain. They wanted to free the Cuban people from Spanish rule. For years Cuban rebels had been fighting the Spanish. Many had died or been thrown into prison camps. Americans, remembering their own war for independence, wanted to help the Cubans.

There were other reasons, too, for wanting a war. Some Americans who did business in Cuba wanted to make the island a part of the United States. Some generals and admirals wanted the U.S. to have Army and Navy bases in Cuba. They thought that control of the island was necessary to the safety of the U.S.

Finally, on April 25, 1898, Congress declared war on Spain. President William McKinley called for 125,000 men to fight.

Early in May, a U.S. fleet under Commodore George Dewey destroyed a Spanish fleet at Manila Bay, in the Philippines. The Philippine Islands, like Cuba, were a Spanish colony at that time.

Landing the American Army to fight in Cuba took longer. Two months passed before 17,000 troops were put ashore. They were not ready for war. Their rifles were old. They wore heavy woolen uniforms in the jungle heat. Their food was often unfit to eat. Men suffered from bad water and from diseases like yellow fever and malaria.

With the troops was a special group of cavalry, or soldiers who fight on horseback. These were the "Rough Riders." Many of them were cowboys from the Western states. Colonel Teddy Roosevelt was the leader of the

Rough Riders. He was eager to fight and win victories and make a name for himself.

Roosevelt and his Rough Riders became heroes in the battles of Kettle Hill and San Juan Hill. With the Rough Riders were the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, which were all-black outfits. With other troops, they shared in the attack. At one point these black outfits rescued the Rough Riders when they were pinned down by Spanish fire.

Atop San Juan Hill, a Spanish army dug in. It was protected by a block-house, or fort. The Americans looked like a ribbon of blue as they moved up the hill. The top roared and flashed with fire. Many Americans fell, sinking into the tall grass. But others waded on bravely, creeping higher and higher toward the Spanish position. The fire of the Spanish riflemen became even more fierce. But the blue line crept up and up. Finally the Spaniards fired a last volley and fled. San Juan Hill was captured and the Spanish flag was pulled down.

Soon another, a Spanish fleet was destroyed at nearby Santiago Bay. Then Spain gave up and signed an armistice. The war was over.

Spain and the U.S. signed the peace treaty the following December. The treaty gave Cuba its independence. It turned over Puerto Rico, another Spanish island in the Caribbean, to the United States. It also turned over Guam, an island in the Pacific, and the Philippines to the U.S. The United States paid Spain 20 million dollars for the Philippines.

Europe was amazed at how fast the U.S. had defeated Spain. It showed that the U.S. was now a world power and that Americans could reach out beyond their continent--into the Caribbean and thousands of miles away into the Pacific.

Many Americans were surprised at the result of the war. They liked the idea of being a "power." Others did not like the idea. They thought that the U.S. now looked too much like a colonial power--like the old colonial powers of Europe. They said that this was wrong for America. They said it went against everything the U.S. had stood for. There was a lot of argument about the peace treaty. Some people said that the U.S. had gone to war just to get hold of some colonies for itself.

What did the United States do with its "empire"?

It kept its troops in Cuba until 1902. Then they were pulled out and Cuba became independent. The U.S. signed an agreement with Cuba in 1903. The agreement gave the U.S. a lease on the naval base at Guantanamo Bay. This lease was signed again in 1934.

The United States has also held on to the island of Guam. Today Guam is Pacific base for both the Army and the Air Force.

In the Philippines, many people did not want Americans to run their country. They thought that the Americans would run the country the same way the Spanish did. The people revolted, but American troops fought against the Filipinos and put down the revolution. In 1934, Congress finally promised independence to the Philippines. This promise was kept. The Philippines became independent on July 4, 1946.

Puerto Rico remained a U.S. Territory until 1952. Since then it has been a Commonwealth--a state with ties to the U.S. Puerto Rico has its own consitution and its own government. All Puerto Ricans are citizens of Puerto Rico and the United States. But they can't vote in U.S. elections unless they have moved to the United States.

from Old Hate-New Hope
by Louis Friedman and Ira Pech
paraphrased, pg. 170-174

Questions:

1. "It is still a mystery," refers to
   a. the peace treaty
   b. a cure for yellow fever
   c. who blew up the battleship Maine
   d. the Rough Riders

2. Which of the following reasons were <u>not</u> given for wanting a war with Spain?

   a. to free the Cuban people from Spanish rule
   b. to free the Filipinos from Spanish rule
   c. for business interests in Cuba
   d. for United States security

3. An armistice is
   a. a carribean animal
   b. a weapon
   c. a truce
   d. a lease

4. You can infer from this article that the newspapers
   a. supported a war with Spain
   b. agreed with the Cuban rebels
   c. believed that Cuba should be independent
   d. all of the above

5. The article mentions two different reactions of American people to the treaty agreements. What were these reactions? What do you think of the treaty agreements?

6. Does the war in the Philippines remind you of any other war fought by American soldiers? If so, which one and why?

7. Define in your own words what <u>colonial</u> means.

ARTICLE A

Puerto Rico is neither an independent country nor a state. It is a territory of the United States with a commonwealth government. It is officially called the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. As a commonwealth, Puerto Rico has self-government, although the American flag flies next to every Puerto Rican flag on the island.

Some Puerto Rican people feel they are Americans and would like Puerto Rico to become the fifty-first state. Others consider themselves Puerto Rican nationals and would like the island to become independent of the U.S. Many others, perhaps the majority, think of themselves as Puerto Ricans yet know they benefit economically from their relationship with the United States. All three groups feel strongly about their ideas, and the divisions among them are sharp .

Those who want statehood look to the U.S. to continue to control and plan the Puerto Rican economy. They point to the fact that Puerto Rico is economically better off now then she was twenty years ago. This, they say, is due to help from the U.S. The backers of statehood think that Puerto Ricans should be full U.S. citizens with representtion in Congress and with the right to vote for the president.

Those who want independence admit that Puerto Rico now has more jobs and a higher standard of living than before. But they say the island is caught in a relationship that returns more money to the U.S. than it leaves in Puerto Rico. The people who want independence say that Puerto Rico will prosper and poverty will disappear only if Puerto Ricans have the power to control their own economy.

Vocabulary Development:

Guess at the following words in content

self-government
nationals
representation
prosper

1) Which title best expresses the main idea of the passage?
   a) Puerto Rico: Statehood, Commonwealth, or Independence?
   b) America's Commonwealth: Puerto Rico
   c) Puerto Rico: The Fifty-First State?
   d) Prospering Puerto Rico

2) What is the purpose of this passage?
   1) to persuade Puerto Ricans to become independent
   2) to persuade people to visit Puerto Rico
   3) to tell how Puerto Ricans feel about their relationship with the U.S.
   4) to tell what the writer thinks about statehood for Puerto Rico

3) What is implied in this passage by the words "although the American flag flies next to every Puerto Rican flag on the island"?

1) Puerto Ricans like to fly the U.S. flag.
2) Puerto Rico and the U.S. both own the island, called a commonwealth
3) Puerto Rico will eventually become the fifty-first state.
4) The U.S. acts as a second government to Puerto Rico.

4) What does "relationship" mean in this passage?

1) relative
2) connection
3) ship
4) idea

5) What does "backers" mean in this passage?

1) people who support the idea
2) people who work hard.
3) people who pack boxes that go to the U.S.
4) people who vote for members of Congress.

Puerto Rico

Since 1898, Puerto Rico has been a colonial or semicolonial appendage of the United States. Over the years, Puerto Rico has paid a lasting price for American patronage--the loss of self-reliance.

United States industries first moved to Puerto Rico to enjoy substantial tax cuts and to seek cheaper sources of labor. These industries promised plentiful employment, which lured thousands of farmers to the cities. Today, the island spends $1.2 billion annually on food imports it could grow itself. Instead, 40 percent of its agricultural land lies fallow. During the 1950's and 1960's, nearly one third of the population migrated to the United States looking for a better life. Of those who remain, 30-40 percent are unemployed, and many people have given up looking for work. More than 50 percent of the population receives food stamps, and almost one-third of the labor force is on the public payroll. Although Puerto Ricans have a per capita income twice that of any other Carribean country, the country is totally economically dependent on the United States. Even though the Puerto Rican government owes $7 billion to the United States banks, the Puerto Rican government has just released the island's biggest budget ever, to try to meet the needs of the island people. Aid from the American federal government is presently being drastically reduced by the Reagan administration.

paraphrased from The Nation
August 22-29, 1981

1) What does "fallow" mean in this passage?

a) rich
b) unused
c) smelly
d) alone

2) Almost one-third of the labor force is "on the public payroll" means that
a) one third of the people receive welfare
b) one third of the people who work have jobs which are paid by the Puerto Rican government.
c) one third of the country is counted in the census
d) one third of the people work in the capital.

3) What does the author infer about why 40% of the Puerto Rican agricultural land lies fallow?

a) Because American industries lured farmers off the land to the cities.
b) Because Puerto Ricans are not good farmers.

c) Because Puerto Ricans do not need more agricultural production
d) all of the above.

4) Do you think the author of this article would favor

a) more United States industries investing in Puerto Rico.

b) Puerto Rican independence from the United States.

c) a new Puerto Rican president.

d) increases in the Puerto Rican budget.

Teaching Suggestions for Compare and Contrast Articles A & B

1) Have students read the articles. Both articles are on the subject of Puerto Rico and its relationship to America. But the themes for each article are different.
Ask students to discuss the similarities and differences in regards to the following questions-
   a) what is the main idea of each passage?
   b) what is the purpose of each passage?
   c) what is the author's point of view in each passage?

2) Read the first paragraph in article A and B. Compare how each article describes the relationship between the U.S. and Puerto Rico simply by comparing the following vocabulary words and their meanings:

A	B
neither an independent country nor a state territory	colonial/semicolonial
commonwealth government	appendage
	patronage
	loss of self-reliance

3) In article A there are three different opinions about the Puerto Rico:United States relationship listed by the author. After reading article B, which opinion do you think author B adheres to? Why? Explain your answer.

Puerto Rico was discovered in 1959.

In 1493 Columbus discovered the beautiful island of Puerto Rico, and opened up a whole world to progress. 15 years ago Union Carbide discovered progressive Puerto Rico and the great potential it has for a company like ours. We started with an initial investment of 30 million dollars. Today that investment has grown to over 450 million dollars and it's still growing. What's behind this growth? People. Puerto Ricans have many traditions and strong family ties. Their way of living and their self-respect make them hardworking and loyal. Their great capacity to learn and improve translates into bigger and better production for the industry and consequently into more benefits for the employee. In 1959 many Puerto Ricans started working with us, today most of them are still with Union Carbide. Over 97% of our work force is made up of people from the island. We're happy with what we have discovered about Puerto Rico. Maybe you'd like to make a discovery of your own.

UNION CARBIDE

The Discovery Company

Teaching Suggestions for Union Carbide Ad

Vocabulary Development: Discuss the meanings of each of the following words:

progress	discovered
progressive	discovery

Key Word Exercise:

Before showing students the ad, ask them to list 3 words that describe Puerto Rican people. After the class has listed the words on the board, pass out the ad. Ask students to discuss how Puerto Rican people are described in the ad. Compare and contrast the two descriptions. Ask students what they think the purpose of the ad's description is?

Discussion Questions:

1) For whom does this advertisement seem written? Why?

2) What kind of work do you think is done by the people from the island who work for Union Carbide..

3)What do you already know about factory work in Puerto Rico? How much do people get paid and what are the working conditions like?

4) What does the ad mean when it says that people are behind the growth in investment? How do people make investments grow?

5) What do you think the ad means when it says that Puerto Rico was discovered in 1959?

Free Writing Suggestion -

Ask students to write an advertisement convincing Puerto Ricans to come to America.

EMIGRATION

My mum and dad came over here in 1956. The country they came from is St. Lucia in the West Indies. My dad came in 1956, that was two years before my mum. She came in 1958. I think my mum and dad came with the intentions of getting jobs and starting new lives. In a very strange country, they had no family, nor friends, at least my mum hadn't. All her relatives are in St. Lucia. My dad had got a few friends and cousins here when he came. I can just imagine when mum got off the boat, all sorts of things going through her mind, thinking what life would be like in England leaving her friends and family behind. Thinking if she would ever go back there and see her old friends and family. My mum has never gone back on a holiday but she is hoping to go some time this year. She does not like it very much over here.

My dad says he doesn't mind it too much. He says that he doesn't want to go back yet on holiday, because if he does he wants to go for good. My mum was born in St. Vincent but she went to Castries, the capital of St. Lucia, when she was six.

For other people who emigrate to other countries they run into a lot of good luck and for other people, well, it's just working day in and day out in a country they don't really like. Once you get on the plane or boat there's no second chance. You can't change your mind, it's just too late and you think to yourself, what have I done? You lose all your friends and they think, " I hope she's doing the right thing, emigrating like that."

Angela Estephane, Age 13

excerpted from: Classrooms of Resistance, complied by Chris Searle

Teaching Suggestions for Emigration

Vocabulary Development:

emigrate
emigrating
emigration

disuss the similarities and differences in these words. Then take the following roots and change their endings to change their meanings -

migrate imagine

Comprehension Questions:

1) Retell the story in your own words. What is happening in the story?

2) Where do you think the story takes place? Why?

3) Who are the characters in the story and what are they doing?

Discussion Questions:

1) Brainstorm together as a class all the problems that the characters in the story face. Which problems are the most difficult to deal with?

2) Do Angela's parents share the same feelings about emigrating? Why or why not.

3) If you know other people who have emigrated, describe their experiences living in a new country.

Free Writing Suggestions:

1) This article is a working definition of the word emigration. The story of these people's lives explains the meaning of the word. Free write your own story about someone's experience of emigration.

2) Describe Angela's parents life in 10 years- what happens to them in the future?

3) Pretend you are Angela's mum and write a letter to a relative in the West Indies.

GRANDMA, PLEASE DON'T COME

by Jesus Colon

(Excerpted from BORINQUEN, An Anthology of Puerto Rican Literature, edited by Maria Teresa Babin and Stan Steiner)

Please, grandma, don't come!

I know they have sent you the airplane ticket, and a dress just your size with black and white squares all over the beautiful taffeta silk. But please, grandma, don't come! They have sent you the photographs of your little darling grandchildren born in New York. True, you have not seen them yet. You would like to leave your tropical sun and mountains and the little rivulet bathing the base of the fence in your backyard and the tall avocado tree right by your kitchen door, just to see and embrace those darling grandchildren. But again, I say, grandma, please don't come!

Yes, it is nice here in a way. It is nice if you are young and willing and able to go down five flights of stairs two or three times a day. If you can "take it" in a crowded subway where you are squeezed in tight twice a day as if you were a cork in a bottle. It is all right in a way--and remember--I only say in a way--for young, strong people. We come to New York young and leave old and tired. All the fun and joy of life extracted from us by the hurry-up machine way of living we are forced to live here. In Puerto Rico, nobody pushes you, you walk slowly as if the day had 48 hours. Persons completely unknown to you say: "Buenos Dias" ("Good morning"), with a reverence and a calmness in their voices that reveals centuries of a quiescent, reposed, unhurried way of life.

No matter how many photographs they send you of Times Square at night, or the Coney Island Boardwalk, grandma, please tell them "NO". A forceful, definite "NO". All those things you have not seen are lots of fun. Don't misunderstand me. New York has many things that are grand. But at your age you will not really be able to enjoy them. You know what snow is? What sleet and snow is? The real physical burden of 20 additional pounds of calico and muslin on your old bones? Puerto Rico's climate doesn't require any more. Grandma, please don't come!

You should see hundreds of Puerto Rican grandmas like you on a wintry snowy day, standing by the window and watching the snow fall, as Ramito our folk singer said when he came here, "Like coconut flakes falling from the sky." At the beginning, snow is a novelty. But after you have seen it once or twice, you wish you were back in Puerto Rico, looking out at your avocado tree and at the tall dignified royal palm piercing the deep blue Caribbean sky with its sheer beauty.

In Puerto Rico you will be chatting your head off in your own language with the other grandmothers. Nobody will shout at you: "Why don't you

talk United States?" Or even threaten you with a beating because you are speaking Spanish. It has been done, you know. People have been killed because they are heard speaking Spanish. So, grandma, please don't come! You will be looking so sad, so despondent, so alone when everybody goes to work and you are left all by yourself in an apartment peering through a window at the passerby down below as they go back and forth splashing the grey, dirty, cold snow in the street and on the sidewalk!

Grandma, you are there on that beautiful isle. You were born there. You have been there all your life. You now have what most people here can only dream about. Don't let sentimental letters and life-colored photographs lure you from your island, from your nation, from yourself. Grandma, please, please! DO NOT COME!

Teaching Suggestions

Vocabulary Development

taffeta

calico In the story these words refer to_____

muslin

reverence

In the story these words refer to_____

calmness

quiescent

reposed In the story these words all refer to_____

unhurried

sad

despondent In the story these words all refer to_____

alone

Snow is described "like coconut flakes falling from the sky." Think of 5 other ways to describe snow.

These are all metaphors. Think of three other metaphors to describe the weather.

Discussion Questions

1 Brainstorm as a class, all the words that come to mind after reading the passage. Based upon the words, have students place each word into a group or category. Discuss why certain words belong together. The discussion should lead students to formulate a number of different sentences that describe the main ideas or themes in the letter.

2 Based upon the words, discuss the tone of the letter:

a) how does the author describe America: what adjectives are used?
b) how does the author describe Puerto Rico: what adjectives are used?
c) ask students to make list of the words describing how the author of the letter feels.

3 Divide the class into two groups. Have one group write a list of all the reasons for the grandmother not to come to America. Have the other group write a list of all the reasons for the grandmother to come to America. Have each group present their list and defend their reasons.

Free Writing Suggestions-

1) Free write a letter to a relative who has never been to America/ Philadelphia and encourage them to (or not to) come live here.

2) Write a dialogue between the grandmother and her grandchild (the author).

3) Describe the grandchild - what does she do, where does she live, how does she feel?

4) Project into the future and write about what happens to the grandmother - does she come to America or not? If she comes to America, describe what she finds and how she feels.

5) Free write all the differences and similarities between Puerto Rico and America that you know of.

Student Free Writings: Learning English and Living in America

My Life Story: Carmen Hernandez

In 1955 I came to New York. I was four years of age. I didn't know the language and was afraid of the place. Where I lived was something new to me because the houses were different. The weather was not the same and it was too cold for me.

My twin sister and I played teacher and pretended that we spoke English. I met a black family who was very nice, although I didn't know what they were saying. In this family there was a deaf mute girl, but I didn't know that because I was young and could not speak the language. I really thought that her way of speaking was English.

I learned English with that family and also in school. I lived in New York for 18 years and then moved to Philadelphia until now.

My Granny's Story

One day, my granny, my cousin Melly, and I went to Front Street and my granny stopped at one of the Chinese stores where they sell fruit and vegetables. Granny bought some fruit and some green bananas, paid for it, and left. As we were walking, granny looked inside her bag, and her green bananas weren't there. So we turned back and told the Chinese man that he didn't put the bananas in the bag. He said that she didn't buy any. Well, my granny went off. My granny started arguing with him. Anyway, she told Melly to look for a cop. My cousin does not like to see granny get started. She gets embarrassed. She said that she couldn't find one (which was true, since she never looked for one). So granny started to look up and down the street and saw a cop on the corner. She went up to him and took him to the store. And the Chinese man and granny started talking at the same time. You couldn't understand either of them. Granny doesn't speak English that well, but she made the cop understand, and at the end, she got her green bananas. When we both looked around to see where Melly was, she was gone. She had left us flat. She had taken off and gone home. When we got home, we started talking and laughing about what had happened.

Learning English At School

Once upon a time this boy told me to go to the teacher and say, "Hi, m-f." I didn't know no English at all, but I went to the teacher and told her what the boy had told me to say, because I didn't know what it meant. The boy was suspended for one week and I was suspended for one day. I learned my lesson in not repeating what other people said, unless I knew what they were talking about.

I am not Spanish at all. No part of me is Spanish. I don't speak the language, nor do I understand it. My children are the same way. Simply because, that is the way I raised them.

I have been in situations which I believe to be racist. One situation I will describe:

> I had to appear at Family Court with my son. When I arrived at the "sign in," the clerk looks at me and my son like we are nothing. He asks me if I know how to write my name down. I say "sure". He just looks at me. He tells us to have a seat, which he also points to. I tell myself, "O.K., maybe he has had a hard day." Finally we are called into court. The court clerk and other people in the courtroom all look at us. They come over and talk in half-ass English to us. They keep asking us if we understand. All through the court case, they act like I don't know anything, and cannot answer their questions. After a while, when the judge asks me to speak, I answer his questions. He acts amazed. He asks me, "Where did you learn to speak English so well?" I simply reply, "It is the only language I speak." Everyone just looks.

This is the point. Just because my name and my son's name is Figueroa, the clerk and people in the court assumed that I was Puerto Rican, didn't speak English and was dumb. I had the feeling that day that we were nobodies at all, we were only Puerto Rican people who didn't mean anything to anybody.

I have had similar experiences before then and after then. I know what Puerto Rican people must feel like when they receive this kind of treatment from other people. I have seen this type of experience happen before to Puerto Rican people- usually it is done by white-collar people who work in the court system. I believe it is racist. All people regardless of names should be treated in the same manner.

Now when this happens I just sit and laugh , and watch people make fools of themselves. But it is not too funny to a Puerto Rican person who can understand what is really going on.

Written by M. Figueroa

Teaching suggestions for "I'm Not Spanish at All."

Vocabulary:

1) what do you think the author means by the expression "half-ass English"

2) what do you think the author means by "white-collar people"?

Discussion Questions

1) How did the author feel about her experience at Family Court, brainstorm together all of her possible feelings.

2) What facts did the clerk have about the author.

3) What inferences or speculations did the clerk make about the author? Were these inferences or speculations based on any facts?

4) What stereotypes of Puerto Rican people does the author mention in her article?

5) What does the author believe is racist and why ?

6) Why does the author think it is less funny for a Puerto Rican person to have the same experience that she did?

Key Word Exercise

1) Have each student list the sterotypes that she/he thinks other people have of them. List all the stereotypes on the board.

   a) have students group together into separate categories the kinds of stereotypes (for example, group together all the sexual, age, race, or physical stereotypes.)

   b) discuss what each category of stereotype assumes about different people. Look at the similarities and differences between each category of stereotype.

   c) discuss the effects of stereotyping on people. Ask students to describe how they feel being stereotyped in certain ways.

Free writing topic

Describe a situation which you experienced or witnessed that you thought was racist.

SUMMERTIME

As soon as I woke up, I could tell it was going to be another hot day. The smells from across the courtyard were already growing in the heat. I dressed fast, gave the kitchen a quick clean up, and left. I wasn't sure where I was going, but I knew I had to get out.

I got on the first bus that stopped. About twenty blocks laters, I saw a big department store on the corner of the street. "That's where I'll go," I said to myself and got off the bus.

As I went through the revolving door I felt the temperature drop fifteen degrees. The air was cool and dry. What a relief from the burning heat of the streets! At first I felt that everyone in the store was looking at me because I wasn't dressed like them. The heat hadn't done my looks much good either. But soon the smell of the store, the neat arrangement of the clothes and all the pretty people made me forget everything. As I walked around looking at the counters and trying on clothes, I started to feel good - finally being cool and away from the noise and the bad air. For a time, I even forgot that I couldn't afford anything I saw.

After I had been in the store for a while, I noticed one of the security guards keeping a close eye on me. He followed me to every department and then stood over to one side as if he were just watching over the general crowd. But I could see that, out of the corner of his eye, he was watching every move I made. That guard made me feel as if I shouldn't even be in the store. I could feel him waiting for me to steal something. "Well, he has some nerve," I thought to myself. Although I didn't have any money to spend, I knew I had just as much right to be there as anyone else. It wasn't a crime to try something on without buying it, at least not yet.

All of a sudden, my air-conditioned adventure wasn't fun anymore. It wasn't fun being followed by a security guard who was just waiting for you to lift something. I decided to leave the store.

I walked home slowly because there was nothing there to make me want to return. It was late by the time I got to the apartment. I turned on the radio just in time to hear the weatherman say that tomorrow would be another hot day.

story by: Peter McLoughlin
Bronx Community College
distributed by: World Education

Revised for use.

Teaching Suggestions

Vocabulary Development:

courtyard
weatherman
something
without
summertime

What do all these words have in common? Make a list of words that follow the same pattern.

In the story the word revolving means_____

In the story the word lift means_____

In the story the word right means_____

For each word mentioned above, give another meaning for the same word.

In the story, the phrase a close eye means_____

Comprehension Questions:

1) Why does the author decide to leave the store?

2) Where do you think the story takes place?

3) Role play a discussion between the security guard and the author.

4) What does the author think about the security guard?

5) What does the security guard infer or assume about the author? What facts does the security guard base his/her assumption or inference on?

6) Why do you think the author says, "It wasn't a crime to try something on without buying it, at least not yet."

7) How do you think the author feels? Why? What is the tone of the story?

8) Have you ever felt similar to the author? Have people ever made assumptions about you? What are the assumptions based upon?

9) What do you think the author will do in the future on hot days? As a class, brainstorm about all the different possibilities.

Free Writing Suggestions:

1) Write a dialogue between the author of the story and the security guard.

2) Free write about a similar experience that you have had.

3) Free write about all the "rights" you think a person should have.